
Letters
from
G. G.

LIBRARY
THE WARD THORNTONS
118 Second Avenue
Chula Vista California
SAN DIEGO



presented to the
LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · SAN DIEGO
by
FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Ward L. Thornton

donor



Clara Corning—
October 1912.

#26273

LETTERS FROM G. G.

"I so love life, for the sake of life,
And breath for the love of breath,
A song for the splendid sake of song,
A word for what it saith.

"For no far end, no gain, no pleasure,
Nor good that comes thereof:
But measured words just for worded measure
I love—for the sake of love."



NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
1909

COPYRIGHT, 1909
BY
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

Published October, 1909

LETTERS FROM G. G.

PROLOGUE

THERE was a Nice Girl who once spent a winter in Paris at a pension, and next her at table chanced to sit a Youth. He was a very Superior Person, very positive, very toplofty, and he had some excuse, for he was Unusually Intelligent.

One day he undertook to snub the Girl—that is, he contradicted her, and treated her in general as if she were a part of the pattern of the wall-paper.

The Girl was unused to that sort of thing, and was breathless with surprise. People were not given to snubbing her, partly because she was so Very Nice, and also because she had a tongue which could be sharp on occasion.

She reasoned the case with herself: One of two things must happen—either she must sit upon that Young Man so hard that he would never recover, or she must be so nice that he would never do it again.

Either alternative was easy, but one was a little the more agreeable, so she gulped hard, and was nice for two whole weeks, to very good effect, for the night before the Youth left Paris he spent the entire evening telling her how very much he liked her.

By that time the Girl had discovered that he was quite exceptionally amusing, and they agreed that though here their paths diverged, yet they would not entirely lose track of each other—that is, they would write.

They wrote at intervals more or less short for two years. Then the opportunity offered of their meeting again. But meanwhile they had grown such good friends on paper that they decided that a renewal of personal acquaintance would be a risk. Their letters were so eminently satisfactory that they doubted

whether they would find each other as entirely delightful, and thought it wisest to let well alone.

More years passed, making them only better friends. They had almost forgotten one another as real people, and each thought of the other as a friendly Myth or Shadow from whom it was good to hear, and to whom it was very pleasant to give all one's real opinions about things.

They wrote . . . of what did they not write? They wrote of Love and Life and Death; of Dogs, of themselves, and one another; of Mice and Men and Modern Instances; of trifles light as air; of all that one does and hears in the course of the day's work, and hands on because it means a laugh or a tear; of all that goes to make people and their lives.

They reveled in the rarity of a friendship which seemed like to become lifelong, based on letters alone—barring the two little weeks of their knowledge of each other face to face.

They enjoyed the Game, and agreed that to meet again in the light of common day would be stupid and obvious and commonplace.

And so they wrote until . . . but you shall read. Don't be alarmed . . . not until they died. They are still alive and writing.

LETTERS FROM G. G.

From G. G. in Paris, to R. F. in Naples.

Spring.

I am not, as you suggest, "of those who make promises but to break them," and I propose to make you very sorry for your intimation of lack of good faith on my part. Shortly after you left Paris I fell ill—very, very, very ill. I am at this moment propped up in bed, making a special and uncomfortable effort. Writing sick abed isn't a bit of fun. But you say you are sailing for home by the end of the week, so if word is to reach you in Naples at all, it must go now, or you will go to your grave thinking me faithless, for I don't believe you would bend your proud pen to writing a third time in the teeth of silence.

It seems long ago that we were neighbors at table for those two good weeks

at the pension; that we heard music together (weren't those good performances of Fidelio and Bohême at the Comique!); that we danced and discussed and walked and saw pictures. Even then I was a bit shaky. I wondered at times if I should weather the season safely, the chill of Paris winter struck so at the marrow of me. How I do hate cold! And the jaunt across the river to the atelier every morning, at misty peep o' day, to be on time for my criticism was a pretty wearing business, that, and the feverishly hard work. I wanted to do so much in the time I had.

Well, you left in February, didn't you? Middle of March I went to pieces—grippe, pneumonia, general smash. It wasn't nice. I almost went mad at the pension. There was a girl in the next room who sang the most heartrending exercises, and tramped about her bare floor industriously in calfskin boots. My doctor—the dear Lord bless him!—saw that if I didn't die of what ailed me, I'd go to a lunatic asylum before he could get me well.

So one day he came with a rubber-tired cab, had me packed in oiled silk and blankets and hot-water bottles, and took me to his mother's house. This mother was one of my mother's oldest and dearest friends, and when we were youngsters, he such a thoughtful, kind boy and I a toddler, we played about in the Tuileries and Champs Elysées together with our *bonnes*. And his dear mother has taken me in and done for me what my mother would have done for him had the situation been reversed.

I was horribly ill, but I'm getting well, and when it is all over there will be much that is lovely to remember. The dear kindness of these sweet people—for it is no joke having a sick girl suddenly plumped down into one's quiet, well-regulated household.

Good-by. I envy you so soon to be on your way home. Greet it for me. Greet home. Greet me America. Greet me Mlle. Liberté in the harbor. Greet me New York.

G. G.

From G. G. in Paris, to R. F. at Home in a Chicago Suburb.

Spring.

You see, I'm still here, but it is Italy next week. Convalescence is mighty pleasant. When, except after an illness, can one hope to feel so babyishly irresponsible? Kitty (one of my sisters who was sent for) does everything but breathe for me. I wish she could manage to do that, for I don't yet find it perfectly comfortable to do for myself. She thinks and acts and speaks for me. I am ashamed making her all this fuss and worry, coming over here to nurse me well, but it *is* such bliss having her around with nothing but me to occupy her mind and person. It makes me think of a verse of hers:

To be a little child once more,
And in its dreamless cradle lie,
And hear a soft voice o'er and o'er
Refraining: "Bylow, baby—bye."

To be a child, be innocence
 Of all that hath man's heart beguiled,
Yet know by some mysterious sense,
 How *good* it is to be a child!

That is it—after a great big illness it is like being a child, yet realizing, which one doesn't as a child, the fun that it is.

And then, after being very ill, one makes a fresh start. All the troublesome things of before are washed away, or sink back into their proper perspective. I don't suppose you suspected while we so gaily chattered in those days that I was mightily bothered about things. So little does one know what goes on under one's neighbor's blond hair.

Well, I feel strangely shut of it all now, and troubled conscience and sorriness for myself have all melted and floated away. I find it painfully easy to laugh. You might, for instance, not be accustomed to thinking of Thoreau as a humorous writer, but Kitty had to stop in the middle of reading Walden aloud to me; we went into such gales over it that my

ridiculous, incompetent lungs couldn't stand the shaking up. I was sent into such spasms of coughing that it didn't do.

It's all right chanting the delights of convalescence, but it's slow—so slow!—and I want to be well *now!* G. G.

FROM G. G. AT MONTORO, NEAR FLORENCE, TO R. F. AT HOME.

Summer.

You were in Florence so lately that it is useless to rave to you about the place, to pile superlative upon superlative. But isn't it the dearest ever?

I've not been back since I was a child here in boarding-school and it's amazing how well I remember it all. I could find my way about blindfold, only it all looked so big and spacious to my child eyes, and how tiny it really is! One can put a girdle around the city in twenty minutes in a cab, and cab-horses aren't racers in this country, as you know—poor dears!

While you were here, did you come out in

this direction? Did you hear of the Villa Montoro? I believe it is the most beautiful place in the world. Italy is indisputably the most adorable country on earth, Florence its fairest city, and Montoro avowedly the loveliest villa in Tuscany! . . . !

There is a view from the end of the bowling green . . . But what's the use? It is so perfect that you can pick out no special feature to describe. Down there in the valley lies Florence, sun-saturated in a baby-blue haze, the Duomo rising waist high above the houses, and all about misty stretches of hill and valley, gray-green of olive orchards, accentuated with rows of black cypress and dotted with creamy villas and peasant houses with pinky-red tiled roofs. The whole so unconsciously right, as right as a daisy field.

But soon we shall be leaving this paradise and the enchanted life here for home, and I'm not sorry, though I don't mean by that to be ungrateful to our lovely hostess. But I'd rather be at home than in heaven any day,

wouldn't you? Aren't you glad you are at home? You don't seem glad enough, yet your new quarters sound mighty attractive. The study you are building sounds a comfy little hole. How glorious to be able to do things on such a gorgeous scale!

You don't seem to dote on your avocation of grain merchant, yet I should judge it had its compensations, when it enables one to line one's nest with Rodin statuary and Besnard pictures. It gave me a shock to hear you were on the Board of Trade. I never suspected it. How did I escape finding out? You seemed to me a dilettante pure and simple, not a bit of a business man; you knew too much about the arts. I was in your city once and was taken to look into the Pit. I can't place you there. Do you behave as much like a raging maniac as the rest of them? I'd give ten cents to see you there with your nice, smooth hair all mussed up and your nice, smooth, correct person and bearing as mussy as your hair.

Good-by. G. G.

From G. G. at Home in a New England Village, to R. F. at Home.

Summer.

I know you'll think it perverse of me to be glad to be here, in a scrubby New England village, with my own flesh and blood and bull-dog, after visiting in an enchanted villa in Italy with "the Quality"; there is a decided flavor of court about Montoro, a beautiful high decorum, a serene order and stateliness. Everything, every detail of the life and its setting is ravishingly beautiful, and I feel while there as if I were treading among the stars, up in the Milky Way, and I dote on it; but . . . what would you? I'm clay, and here in this little old gray-shingled house with the green door I find life, if not so wonderful, yet very sweet to live. It's like getting back to one's worn old bed slippers after floating about in Mercury's winged sandals.

We had a nice journey home. We came on the *Trojan Prince* from Leghorn. Stopped a couple of days in Genoa. There was a

church show going on there. The harbor was being blessed. There were barges filled with high church dignitaries in superb togs filing around among the warships and merchant craft. The barges were decked out like things in pictures or on the stage, with velvet awnings and gold fringes and embroidery and flowery festoons, and there were draperies and scarfs in melting colors, trailing deliciously over the sides in the water.

That always seems the last touch in glorious extravagance and delights one of me, while it distresses the other.

Then the boat took us to Girgenti in the south of Sicily to pick up a cargo of sulphur. We had two days there, though it seems a dream, it was so incredibly lovely. I believe I've seen temples now to rival yours in Pæstum. Temples made of gold-colored crumbling stone, seen against a sea of chrysoprase, with an amethyst sky above, turning to turquoise overhead. And Girgenti itself? I'm convinced I've seen Greece and Spain and the

Orient now. I'm sure that town on its high crag is a composite of the three.

Then to Naples, and we had a day at Pompeii. We had a beautiful young guide to show us about the place, and I *must* tell you about that guide—it's too good to keep. He was young and beautiful—as beautiful . . . well, as beautiful as a young Neapolitan guide. How do they manage it, the men there? They look like lovely animals, or ripe fruit, and as unconscious. The women, on the other hand, are deadly. All you are aware of as you look at them is a desire to catch them and scrub them, shampoo their hair, and clap them into some proper stays, and tell them to sit up. I'm speaking of the *bourgeoises,* not the peasants.

But about our guide. He looked like a young emperor, as grave and lofty and sweetly dignified. When we had quite done the rounds of the sights he stopped, and leveling his impersonal gaze upon us: "And now, ladies, remains but to ask whether you prefer to depart with sweet memory of our beautiful

Pompeii or whether you would wish to be shown some obscene paintings?"

If you knew Kitty you'd know how funny this is. She has the dearest, clear gray eyes in the world. She returned his sober gaze and answered without a quiver that he was very kind, but we preferred to see nothing further.

Then we lagged behind, and when we were hidden from view behind the angle of a building we fell upon each other's necks in a long, limp giggle. That question, to us, the unmistakable, the just-as-far-as-you-can-see-them New England spinsters!

After Naples we stopped nowhere until we landed in New York, and it took eighteen days. So the whole trip was a good month in perfect weather.

I had bought an old copy of Dante in three volumes for a franc in Genoa, and that was my 'board-ship reading, that and Mr. Dooley. Percy Atherton gave him to me before I left Paris, and I shall always bless him for the in-

troduction. And then I learned by heart a score or more of the sonnets of the House of Life. I shall forget them in the main, I suppose, but never *quite*.

There were only eleven cabin passengers aboard, but hundreds of steerage, who kept us from being dull. They were a continuous show. All we needed do was to lean over the rail of our high deck and look down upon comedy and drama, with occasional suggestions of tragedy. There was a girl, and we found out her name, ominously enough, was Carmela, and I miss my guess if she does not end her career with a stiletto in her back.

I'm afraid—yes, I'm very much afraid—I sympathize with what you confess is your ideal of bliss—to do nothing and have no desire to do anything. No wonder, if that's your frame of mind, you don't love your trade of buying and selling. I don't love my painting trade either, I'll confess to you. Not because I don't love art; I do, and that's why I don't enjoy the things I perpetrate. You who

have never seen any of them have no idea how bad they are. When I have painted a member of any household I frequent, I feel the house closed to me forever—I can't bear to be faced by my objectionable creations. Funny, too! for in the art school I was rather a prize pupil, snatched scholarships, and was especially petted and made of. But when I came to do it for money, that queered it all, and I've never worked freely since.

How often poor Manon Lescaut's cry has rung in my heart: *"Oh! qu'il serait amusant, de s'amuser toute la vie!"* Or even if there were no question of amusing oneself, just to do nothing—nothing f'rever, 'n ever, 'n ever. Just to lie in the sun, the blessed, democratic sun. Why, Romney Flagg, if I had an income the size of the point of a needle, suppose I'd ever do a stroke of painting or work of any sort again in this life? Catch me!

But now let me warn you right here: this is Gladys Gay, the Bohemian talking to you. Next week, or to-morrow, or three minutes

hence, Gladys Gay, the Puritan may address you, saying: Work, work, work, for it is the only blessing, the only thing that is worth while, the only thing that earns you standing-room, the only real service, and hence the only road to peace and happiness.

Good-by. G. G.

G. G. AT HOME, R. F. AT HOME.

Autumn.

You like the sound of my house? Yes, I believe you would if you saw it, too; people do. And there is something very endearing about the Cape. Of course, it is sometimes called nothing but a sand heap sparsely covered with scrub oak and pine, and there is some truth in that, I'm bound to admit. It *is* sandy and ragged *and* mosquitoey, but the stunted trees leave one all the clearer, freer, bigger hemisphere of sky, and such a splendid big wind sweeps across it constantly. The air is so clean, it is like being out at sea all the time.

And then the long, low line of the marshes. There is a homeliness, a humility in the landscape that makes it most lovable, and the tiny cottages seem the human expression of the landscape, the little oxydized-silver houses, snuggled down low, hugging the ground, like the gray rocks in the pastures.

You want to hear more? Why, there is not much more to tell, except that it is a great, good thing to have a house of one's own. When Alice Hayes heard that we thought of buying one, when we were leaving our old home, she urged so feelingly: "Oh, *do* take it! Do! Have a place of your own, be independent of *visits!* People are always so shy of inviting folks who have no home to go to *after.* They always have the question in the back of their minds: 'I wonder has she any plans after her two weeks here are over? I wonder where she'll go when she leaves here?' "

Them as has, gits! Rather cynical view of the hospitable, but Miss Hayes assured me a

true one—alas, to justify which, people will quote instances of homeless guests invited for ten days remaining fourteen years!

I must be sending you a picture of the house, and I want you to take special note of the front porch, for that is the Porch that Oliver Built.

The first year we were here Oliver spent several weeks at an inn hard by. He spent his days with us, and made himself useful, helping settle, unpack books and china, and washing the "images," as Arlie called the bric-à-brac. A friend came to spend a few days with him about Labor Day. The two hired a canoe, and were enthusiastic over paddling about the river. I was awakened Labor Day morning by a mighty sound of thumping, sawing and discussion in the yard. When I came down I looked out of the back door, and saw Oliver and Geoffrey bustling about. I asked what*ever* was up? Oliver said that as they had no paddle for the canoe it seemed rather necessary to make one.

"Is *that* all? I thought from the catouse you were making you were building on an extension to the house, or at least a front porch."

At that, what Thomas Hardy calls a "deedy look" came into Oliver's eye, and no more labor was wasted on the paddle—it was dropped and forgotten along with the canoe. He trotted off and collected cedar rails all over town, and by night there was a fair start toward a rustic porch. Geoffrey went away next day, but Oliver worked on alone for two mortal weeks; it was all you could do to get him in to meals.

And, you know, only a true artist could ever have made anything so pretty, so right in every line and proportion, so strong, so graceful, so complete. It gives the house such individuality and distinction. The little seats at the sides are just the right height and depth, the roof has just the right angle. It is a dear porch, and it is all smothered in trumpet vine now.

Some one, seeing it when it was first fin-

ished, turned in astonishment to Oliver: "Whoever would have thought you were such a carpenter?" "Why, didn't you know," said Oliver, "I did all the rustic work on the Waldorf-Astoria?"

No, there is little further to tell you about the house except that it seems the place where every one in town has lived at some time. Half the population of the village appear to have been born in the southwest chamber, or their grandmothers died there, or their Aunt Jemimas set up housekeeping here when they were married. It seems to have had a varied career. I wonder what the ghosts of past inmates think of it now, with its concert grand piano, and Venetian mirrors, and Florentine tapestries, and Bokhara rugs, and all Mother's dear belongings?

People ask us if we are not afraid of leaving the house alone over winters. Afraid? Why, the natives wouldn't steal. There are no tramps ; this is a respectable community, and if there *were* tramps they'd

heaps rather have nice fresh-colored chromos than any of our dim paintings. What would they do with photographs of Botticelli Madonnas and saints? As for the books, much use they'd have for them! Then the rugs—no one would give them house room. Faded, rather threadbare, rather ragged—I dare say they'd wonder we litter the place up with them. And Ginori porcelain, I'll engage, is not sufficiently durable-looking to tempt them.

I could tell you a lot about the natives, but it's bedtime, and they'll keep, as they are the salt of the earth. G. G.

G. G. AT HOME, TO R. F. AT HOME.

Autumn.

You can no more place me in a little gray cottage on the New England coast than I can you in the Wheat Pit? Believe me, I very much belong here; I belong here as much as in the Louvre, or the Italian garden o' dreams, or little old Broadway.

You want to hear more about our place and our ways of life?

It's a tiny house, plenty of room in it for four guests, but none for a servant. Kitty and I are the servants, and you've no idea how deliciously clear and fresh the atmosphere of a servantless house is! The house is so small we *couldn't* have a domestic forever around under our feet. Besides, no servant would put up with a kitchen no bigger than a postage stamp, and no modern conveniences, no set tubs, not even a pump, nothing but a well. You couldn't expect a servant to see the beauty of the motion of pulling up a bucket from the well as compared with that of working a pump handle, now could you?

The kitchen is the pride and joy of our hearts. Talk about convenience! You can stand in the middle of it and open the window, shut the door, poke the fire, and stir the pudding. It is as compact as a ship's galley. In contrast to that, we have a shelf filled with cookery-books in all languages—great

tomes in red morocco: "La Cuisine Classique," "La Regina delle Cuoche," a big German volume full of illustrations of imperial puddings and ice-cream castles, also that greediest of works, George Augustus Sala's "Thorough Good Cook"; such good things in that! He describes dishes *con amore,* he makes your mouth water, only his recipes are rather impossible; they all begin with a pint of cream, and that, you know . . . when you have no cow . . .

Well, there's just one thing in life I pride myself upon, and only one, and that is my cooking. I'm a cook-book cook, I grant you, but that wouldn't trouble you a bit while you were eating my spaghetti, and my pies, and my gingerbread, and my chocolate cake, and my *soupe à l'oignon,* and my corn fritters. And Kitty cooks even better than I. We have our specialties, and neither encroaches upon the other's grounds.

We usually come down in May, and have a week's hard house-cleaning, but when that is

over we sit back and breathe the fragrance of cleanliness, and rejoice our sight in shining brass and glass and china, and polished furniture, clean, mellow-colored rugs, and fresh curtains.

Then begins our happy summer career as hostesses. There is a peculiar pleasure and satisfaction in attending to the creature comforts of people one likes. It is a joy of a very special stamp to bake and brew things to make one's ascetic friends overeat disgracefully. It is pleasant to wait upon them, to prepare their bath, make their bed, wash their dishes.

We love to have people come. We love to have them stay, and stay as long as they will, and then, I don't mind whispering to you, we love to have them *go,* and come again some other time. We have people with us all summer long, and it is sweet! But the sweetest time of all is in October, when for our last six weeks here Kitty and I are quite by our-

selves. That is when we are Darby and Joan indeed.

Oh, the days of *Santa Pace* that dawn for us then! Long mornings of work, Kitty shut up in the library, I shut up here in my den; long afternoons of walking in the autumn woods; then long delicious rest when we come home dog-tired, that good tired that comes of beautiful long miles, rest by the blazing wood fire on the hearth in the dusk. We lie on the couch in front of it and dream long waking dreams. And then the long evenings! A lamp is lighted and placed on a table before the fire, and Kitty-Darby sits on one side reading aloud, and I-Joan sit on the other side rocking and knitting, and the fire purrs, and Mick over on the couch snores in content. And the wind outside sighs, and the lilac bush and the peach tree tap at the window and intensify the feel of protected warmth in the little book-lined library.

And when bedtime comes we build up a high blaze and go to sleep in the next room

with the pinky light dancing on walls and ceiling. Such good long nights o' sleep! *Talk about peace!*

The happy days draw all too soon to a close and then trunks are fetched down from the attic and all is prepared for winter. The smiling little house looks strange and unfriendly dismantled and shrouded in brown holland and sheets, with a pervasive penetrating odor of naphtha mothballs. It gives a twinge to turn the key in the lock of the green door, with its nice old brass knocker, and to turn one's back upon the trumpet vine—but ahead lies New York! New York full of friends and picture shows and music and hot tubs! New York, the very smell of whose dirty streets and noise of whose insane traffic are thrilling.

It is a sad moment when one pulls out of the little station; but oh! it's fine to land at Forty-second Street!

Good-night. It is late. My candles are flaring and fainting. G. G.

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Winter.

You don't seem to entirely realize that I very much belong to the working-class, and earn what bread I eat; and just now, after my long vacation, it is a matter of no work—no bread, and I can't be fluttering off to Chicago on pleasure bent at the very outset of the season, especially as I am lucky enough to be up to the ears in painting. Yes, the miniature trade flourishes, and all I pray for is eyes to keep it up with. Eyes are a grave question when one does miniatures. If I sang, my throat would doubtless constantly threaten giving out; if I wrote, I dare say I should be running out of brains; if I were on the stage, I should have panics about my face and figure. Well, when my eyes give out, I can always hire out as cook.

I *am* working awfully hard, and playing hard as well. One can't help overdoing both in this crazy town. I work all day, and then

at night I hang an evening frock on my bones and devote myself to diversions. A quiet evening at home with a book, by the lamp, is the exception and the luxury; and you know, in its way, I love this as much as the life at home, in that dear crumb of a village where one can rise every morning in the soothing certainty that nothing will happen—unless it is that the iceman fails to appear, and that is exciting, if you like.

I like the extremes—the dead of the country and the heart of the city. No commuter's life in mine, thank you.

It has its depressing aspect, the heart of the city, I don't deny. When I come back to it, sometimes, after long months of the sweetness of the country, I feel a frantic desire to rush away, away, away—anywhere out of the world—out to sea in an open boat—out of sight of land; to the mountain-tops; to the deep, silent forest places; away from the sight of ill-used dogs and horses and children; from the sight of the crowds in the streets of peo-

ple, nine out of every ten of whom look as if they ought still to be going about on all fours; away from the sight of this parody of life, the bitter gaiety, the light-hearted corruption of this thoroughfare of hell, this plague-spot on the face of the earth.

But it all wears off in an incredibly brief time, and when the time comes I am loath to leave the never-ending kaleidoscopic show, so freighted with human interest. The people, all sorts and conditions of men, that is what is so unflaggingly entertaining, for I like people, you know. I gather from an occasional word you have let drop here and there that you are not overfond of *la bête humaine*. I have to own to a very vulgar love of human beings of all kinds. I like them, and I'd engage to get on equally well with the Czar of Russia, Jack the Ripper, Kid McCoy or Beau Brummel. Of course, you are right; it is seldom that one can sight up very high at one's neighbor and not overshoot the mark, but all people have their points, if one has the beauty-seeing eye

to detect them. They may not strike a very uniformly high level, like our skyscrapers, but, like most churches, they may have a spire—or two.

Good-by, and let me repeat how nice I think it of you all to have wanted to see me again. Are you quite sure you did? You know *I'm* not entirely sure that I want to see *you* again. Now, please, *please,* no misunderstanding! For that I must trust you. The idea is, that from things you say I think you have perhaps a rosier memory of me than I could quite live up to, and that it would be at the risk of disillusioning you that I should permit myself to be seen again.

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Winter.

What is one to do about coming of Puritan ancestors? There ought to be a remedy. Won't you—or some one—invent a quick, sure, safe cure?

I was coming home from downtown in a Sixth Avenue car the other night, between six and seven o'clock. Two men got in at Fourteenth Street and sat in the corner opposite me. One was a spare, red-headed, pale young man, talking eagerly and hurriedly to the other, a huge creature who looked like an elderly toad, shabby and dejected enough, and most unappetizing. He looked a good, honest sort, though.

The young man was evidently trying with all his might to cheer the elder. It seemed characteristic of New York that his efforts at bracing up his friend had to take place in a crowded car during the hurried run between Fourteenth and Thirty-fourth Streets. He was trying hard to give the greatest possible help in the shortest possible time, and the words tumbled out sharp and quick and emphatic:

"Now, you just want to brace up! You mustn't give up, d'ye hear? Yes, I know; that was a good job you lost, and you'd had

it for years, but what of it? There's other good jobs! And you've got a good name and a clean record behind you, and lots of friends, all right. And your friends ain't goin' back on you. They're goin' to stand by you. Yes, of course, you ain't as young as you was, but then neither is your children as young as they was; and they're goin' to be able to help. And then there's your wife. Your wife is a fine woman. She'll stick to you—job or no job. And there's my wife. Why, my wife jest thinks the world of you. She was sayin' only the other night how much she thought o' you. Now, you jest want to stand up and face the band, and rely on your friends. They ain't goin' to see you go to the wall. *I* ain't, for one. You won't forget that, will you?"

The old man seemed greatly moved. He murmured his thanks in broken scraps:

"You're awful kind . . . Your wife is real good! . . . Thank her for me . . . I'm very sensitive, and I appreciate it when folks have a friendly feelin', and speak a kind

word to me. . . . Thank you . . . Thank you all . . . !"

At Thirty-fourth Street the young man briskly shook hands, thumped his friend earnestly on the back, and dashed for the door, to transfer to a crosstown car.

The old man sat in his corner. A newsboy passed. He stopped him and bought a paper —not to read. He opened it and held it before his face to screen himself from sight, but I saw the tears stream down his cheeks, and I saw the disconsolate sag of his trembling mouth and chin.

I had to leave the car at Fortieth Street, so I had not much time to think what to do. I wanted so to speak to him, to say: "Don't grieve; please don't! Honestly, it will all come right."

But oh, the self-consciousness of New Englanders! Their fear of their impulses! Their dread of being thought forthputting! What would the man think of a strange wo-

man stepping up and speaking to him—no matter why?

And so I walked out of the car without a word or a look at him.

I wonder *did* it turn out all right? I have thought of him ever since, always with regretful, prayerful well-wishing.

What would you have done, you, who are not from Boston, Massachusetts?

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Spring.

You will find inclosed a memory-jogging picture of your old friend of Paris days. You say that you catch yourself trying vainly to recall what I look like. That I seem to you now a myth, a shadow. Well, this is how I should wish you to remember me. It is a half-tone reproduction which appeared in a magazine of a portrait of G. G., done by probably the best miniature painter in America. I know you'll say to yourself as you look at

it: "Jove! she's good-looking! I didn't remember her as good-looking as that!"

Now, that's all right. You don't remember me like that because, my friend, I am not like that—not when I first get up in the morning and hook together a serviceable shirtwaist and skirt, and go down to breakfast. But, bless you! it is not the office of the miniature painter to depict one at one's flattest and most unprofitable. A miniature painter should make it his charming task to immortalize a woman at her "one dead, deathless hour," as she is in the eyes of her lover, at the most ecstatic moment of his rosiest dream of her!

Now—there I am! That miniature is what *I* call a success.

When Laura was painting it she asked me if I didn't think, honestly now, that she was being mighty kind to my collar bones? She was, indeed, as you see, and to my nose also. That *willing* nose, as Laura so sweetly termed it, which is such a contradiction to the chin.

The nose is whispering, "You may"—when the chin announces, "You *sha'n't!*"

As for you, you are as present to me to-day as you were a year ago February. I think I could make a pencil sketch of your Græco-American profile, but that, let me hasten to add, is because I have the eye whose business it is to take account of lines and shapes, so you needn't feel flattered.

Do you realize that we are coming to be very old friends? Have you not often had occasion to sigh: "Where are the friends of yester-year?"

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Spring.

Not satisfied with that nice pretty picture? You want one that does not look "so far from earth"? Well, then, here is one as near to the earth as you could wish. I'm sending it to you not really to fill your long-felt need, but to show you, for one thing, how very

dear Mick is. Don't you love him, sitting up there on the bench so still, with paws in G. G.'s lap?

And for another—but stay!

No use—when spring "paints azure all above and emerald all underfoot," I am like that lilac bush in Bryant Park; not being a poet I can't burst into rapturous song. The best I can do is to blossom into glad raiment.

Nothing, for the time being, is so well worth study, not brown—but light-hearted, iridescent study—as *clothes!*

For a spell there I have not a soul above a silk petticoat, until at Easter I climb to one in the form you see reproduced.

I say, Romney Flagg, dear boy, will you be pleased just to look at me 'at? My hat, did I say?

MY HAT!!!

Doesn't it deserve to be writ in letters capital? Not on brass or stone or earth or what-

ever—but in the hushed and reverent heart of man!

It should really be spoke in verse, not in my colloquial *patois,* for few things so deserve immortality as this same sweet thing in hats. We have spoken of the moral element of true beauty. The moral support afforded me by that thing resting like a blessing on my head! It feels like a halo descended from heaven upon me. It is the glory that was Paris and the grandeur that was Rue de la Paix!

My mental and spiritual make-up ought to undergo repairs to match it. It looks as if physically I'd do, for I defy you to say it is not becoming; but otherwise—oh, yes, I know I'm miserably unworthy of it, for find me in art or nature anything more consummate than the curves of that brim; more flower-like than the droop of the plumes; more mysterious than the windings of the velvet under the edge; more tenderly dazzling than the wreath; more luscious than the deep gold of the straw!

G. G. at Home on the Cape, to R. F. Home again from Europe.

Autumn.

Glory be! You've written at last!

I was on the point of sending you a copy of a poem by Emily Dickinson. One verse, the first, runs:

> "I had a guinea golden;
> I lost it in the sand,
> And though the sum was simple,
> And pounds were in the land,
> Still had it such a value
> Unto my frugal eye,
> That when I could not find it
> I sat me down to sigh."

I had no relish, no mind at all, to lose my sterling friend, and I was so happy to see your funny, familiar fist in its customary green ink, that I forgive you the very lame reasons you give for your interminable silence.

All the elaborate reasons you give for opening your letter with a frank "Dear Gladys" are equally flimsy. The only one that counts is the very first: that you want to, and don't

think I'll mind. Gracious, no! Call me anything you like. I don't like Gladys myself. It is only one degree less stupid a name than Grace or Mabel or Ethel, etc., and nobody but picture-show catalogues calls me Gladys, anyway. It's always my two initials, G. G. or just G. that I'm called, with such vulgar variants as Gyp, Gippo, or Gipporino.

I don't so very much care for *your* name, Romney, you know, so I shall call you Guinea Golden. Isn't that a pleasant name? I'll call you that as long as you write me long, pleasant letters; when you don't, you will be Guinea Pig!

G. G. AT HOME TO R. F. AT HOME.

Autumn.

Don't you think grown-ups as a rule rather dislike picnics? They leave the liking of them to children. For their part they had rather stay at home and eat in the dining-room at a solid table, in a comfortable chair, without spiders and dead leaves in their victuals.

But I do love a picnic! Just the packing of a basket with eatables, and going somewhere, anywhere, so long as it is away, to eat in the open, makes a holiday and a treat.

I can remember many a picnic of the kind the picture of which naturally rises in one's mind at the name. The sort to which many people and all their children are asked, that take place in some nice, clean grove to which one drives in "barges." The sort that are all fun and feed for the young, all work and weariness for the elders, whose only pleasure in the thing is in seeing the children enjoy themselves.

From eleven on through my teens the years were punctuated with birthday picnics of that description, for which I have prayed for good weather with desperate intensity for days before.

But the picnics that have made dear the name have been very different. Much less populous, for one thing. The ideal number of participants is two, possibly four, or even

three. Of course, they must be exactly the right three or four, but I've not found the right people for tête-à-tête picnics so very rare.

Kitty and I mark with golden letters certain days in our past on which we have started off in the morning, with food for the day, and come home at night, having passed spotless, consummate hours.

Once Mother and Daisy went to the Worcester Music Festival, on a glorious September day. Kitty and I, left to ourselves, took sandwiches and fruit, a book of old English ballads and the dogs, and went to Chestnut Hill Reservoir. We've never forgotten the mood of that simple day.

Oliver made one in some of our most memorable picnics. On a special one there were but the three of us: Kitty (poet), I (painter) and Oliver (painter-poet). You might expect of that combination that reason and soul would be the fare. At most a grape, a wafer, a drop of dew? No such thing. I

wish you had seen the size hampers we staggered under on our way to Duxbury.

It was early May, apple-blossom time, and we knew of an orchard down there that was a miracle in the spring. We took an early train, and had time for a good rest before food, under the most thickly blossomed, embowering pink tree.

Such a spread! Anchovies, olives, salame, cold chicken, a salad; and for sweets, those marvels, pecan sticks and brandied marrons glacés, all accompanied by champagne. I've said ever since that no one knows champagne who doesn't know it in the sunshine, under apple-blossom boughs.

There was not the slightest suggestion in us that day of the lean, hollow-eyed artist, starving in his garret, nor did we bear out the popular impression that has it that the artistic temperament is coupled with a dainty appetite and a delicate constitution. (It was Maude Valerie White, and she's an artist, if

you like, who used so devoutly to say: "Thank God, I'm greedy!")

We've had some picnics on the river, when, after an afternoon's canoeing, we have found precisely the spot, and tying the canoes together have had our meal by sunset glow, in the lee of a wooded shore, and paddled home by moonlight. Fragrant memories, those!

Nowadays, when Kitty and I are alone at home on the Cape, we sometimes walk to the sea, three miles from the house, with bread and butter spread with meat for solid and jam for sweet. We sit on the sand and rest and look at the water and are very happy.

Even taking our food on a tray out under the big oak in fair weather makes a miniature picnic, and is an improvement on the dining-room. And now that we have added a back porch and can set a table out there, though that is only one remove from the every-day programme, it still smacks of picnic, and the food is doubly grateful and blessèd, because eaten under the sky.

Is it a relic of the child or of the savage that lingers in us?

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Winter.

The yearly operatorial debauch has begun, Guinea, my dear. Once I'm started, you can't stop me. I go through the season on a prolonged music jag, and this year it is more than usual strong upon me because I've had luck, and the pennies are not as scarce as they sometimes are, and there are *such* things to be heard!

Some children are born with silver spoons in their mouths, others are said to be born pencil in hand. I think I must have come into the world presenting a ticket which should admit me to all the music I wanted to hear.

I began early my mad career as opera-goer. I was not three years old. I still retain a vague impression of sitting up in the front of

a box at the Pagliano in Florence, dressed in my best frock, clutching a bouquet in both hands, and listening with every fibre of my little body. It was "Rigoletto," my first delight. Delight it was, though all that remains of that first performance is a memory of a man in red tights, and a lady in white who wept in her pocket handkerchief.

Then "Aïda," over which I broke my heart, for the tenor was a friend of the family and a particular friend of mine, and when I saw him dying in the black dungeon, I bellowed right out: *"Nannetti! Nannetti! Mio povero Nannetti!"* and had to be hurried out of the box and pacified and told that it was all make-believe, and that I should see my Nannetti safe and sound next day if I'd be good and stop crying.

All through boarding-school years our greatest treat was going to the opera, and there was another case of heartbreak one day when I fell down and damaged my nose, and was such a sight that *"Mademoiselle,"* our

"*directrice,*" wouldn't let me go to hear "Norma" in the evening. I've never had the chance since. I've never heard "Norma," and I'm afraid I shall never catch up with that one missed opportunity.

After we came home to America, of course opera nights were fewer than in Italy, but then there were the symphonies, bless 'em, year in, year out. In Boston they only gave us a couple of weeks' opera season, and that had to last us until next year. But, oh, my soul! the year the De Reszkes first came! Who will ever forget those performances in Mechanics' Hall! I fell in love at first hearing with divine Jean, and I shall die and turn to dust still adoring him, and thanking my stars that I happened to be alive when he was, and privileged to hear him in his glory. I heard him so often that finally before the end the impression of his voice became enduring, and now I can shut my ears and summon back the echo of entire passages and phrases as he rendered them.

Ah, Jean! the only one of his kind that ever was or ever will be. The only Romeo, the only Lohengrin, the only Walther, and Tristan, and Siegfried! The only one who ever made one realize to the very full every possible romantic beauty of a character he impersonated and all the beauty of the music that he sang.

There were two charming boys of our acquaintance in those old Boston days who shared our enthusiasm for opera (Kitty is as music mad as I). One was a budding composer, the other a student of philosophy at Harvard. How often we climbed the gallery stairs together! We usually went Dutch treat, but once these youths invited us, and we went to hear "Tristan and Isolde," and had good seats, and we were very fine, and long after I learned that it was fortunate the weather was mild for a time just then, for the philosopher, Colline-wise, had pawned his overcoat to pay for his share of the tickets, the dear thing!

Nowadays in New York here there is liter-

ally no staying away from the opera. For one thing it is so close at hand. How could I settle down to a quiet evening's letter writing to Guinea Golden when I knew that the "Walküre" was going on within a few hundred feet? I believe I've sat in every corner of that good old Metropolitan Opera House from the front row in the orchestra to the last in the "sky parlor," and further, for I heard the "Götterdämmerung" one night last spring from the stairway of the fire-escape *outside!* It was a balmy, starry night, the windows and doors were all left open, and I heard every syllable even of the text. The music came mellowed by the distance, accompanied by the muffled hum of the streets below. What was amusing was when the "Funeral March" was being played, and the brasses made those big boom-boom crashes, to hear the electric-car gongs down in Broadway make response with a tinkling ping-ping.

Well, rather than stay away from an opera or a symphony, I believe I'd sit perched

throughout a performance on the center chandelier if they'd let me.

Now, I ask you, when one cares that much for anything, isn't one entitled to one's fill of it? I know people a-plenty who raise their eyebrows in disapproving wonder that near beggars like us should indulge in what seems to them an extravagance. But as we sit in our modest places, with rapture filtering through our ears to our souls, we ask ourselves the question: If *we* have not a right to be here, who has? Leave us to get on, if need be, without the necessities of life, but grant us the luxury of music.

Man does not live by bread alone.

G. G., Broadway, to R. F. at Home.

Winter.

Of course you don't know Maude Sanderson, do you, Guinea? Well, if ever there was a dear soul! The sort that makes you feel as if not only she, but the whole world loved and appreciated you.

One night, awhile ago, a number of us were discussing the question: If one could be some one else, and could meet one's present self, would one like oneself?

Some thought yes, some thought no, giving more or less unconvincing reasons.

But sweet-hearted Maude exclaimed with such complete conviction: "Why, I'm sure I should *love* myself! I should be so sure of so much love in return."

And that ended the discussion, it seemed so final.

For my part, I always did agree with Mrs. Golightly in her admission: "I never could quite hate a man for quite adoring me." Man, or woman either, for the very best reason in the world for liking people seems to be their liking one. It is the most endearing quality. Nothing, not the charm of beauty, youth, wit, character, goodness or gold, compares with it.

But then it doesn't need to go as far as that. Who wants to be adored by every passer-by? What I'm coming to is the charm

that people have—and by people I mean just people, strangers, folks around the streets, in shops and trains and street-cars—a charm that it would seem easy to cultivate or develop —that of *seeing* one. Do you know what I mean? That of giving one a sense that one exists for them, of not being so completely imprisoned in themselves, within the walls of their own thoughts and interests that no stranger need apply for admittance to their consciousness.

Don't you know the feeling of warm gratitude that gushes up in your heart if a shop-girl really sees and hears you, if she gives you the feeling that you are something more than a part of her weary mechanical drudgery?

I once happened to be in a big department store to which I seldom went because it is so far from home. I bought some stationery. The girl in charge of the counter was so amiable, she radiated such general good will, and treated me so like a human being that natu-

rally I've gone to her for my writing-paper ever since. And though I have to go far, I'd go farther just to pay homage to that lovable quality—the consciousness of the *other* person. She makes of her business of selling paper a personal relation.

I dare say in the same way shop-girls remember customers who are aware of them as individuals and not money in the slot machines across the counter.

I saw a case once in Sixth Avenue of an old shoe-lace peddler holding out his fistful of dangling shoe-laces to the passing stream of shopping women. He might have been thin air, or the people blind; no one saw him. If they did, it was mostly with a look that swept him from the sidewalk into the gutter and off the face of the earth.

And then a girl walked by, unhurriedly, and saw the outstretched hand full of strings, and from the hand she glanced to the face. And she had eyes in her head that saw what they were looking at, and carried the message to a

brain that understood and to a heart that felt, and her whole person spoke so plainly:

"You have a gentle, patient old face, and you are old. Your shoe-laces are probably pretty bad, but I'd buy some only I can't just now, though I can't stop to tell you why. But I'm sorry, and another day I'll buy if I can."

Believe it or not, she said it all, and the old man felt it, and I'm sure he had a comfortable sense of being made of flesh and bones, and not of mist, as she went by with the crowd. A pleasant sense which was the forerunner of and maybe quite equal to the satisfaction of selling the dozen laces I stepped up and bought of him, all on account of the girl's genial, comprehending, responsive eyes, which appeared to be open to every appeal made to them.

.

In these days, when such a howl is going up over the rise in the cost of living, over the Baked Apple 10c. sign, which seems to spell

poverty for so many, I'll confide to you that I think people miss a lot in not being poor.

I don't mean the sort of poverty that knows how poor it is, and how poor it is going to remain, but the uncertain poverty, the adventurous, the Bohemian poverty, that hasn't a penny to-day, but may have some to-morrow.

I don't know, it may be a case of sour grapes, but I think I'm honest when I say that for nothing in the world would I be anything but a poor Bohemian.

Would I, I wonder, even if I had the chance, settle into an orderly member of society with a salary or an income? Or would I refuse to surrender the vivid joys of the unexpected that come of belonging to the army of those who live on nothing in particular a year?

I'm glad the chance is not likely to be offered me. It would be disappointing to find that I'd consent to fall into the groove in which a real bed, and three meals a day, and

the amount of clothes prescribed by the law were assured me until I died.

No need to tell me that it is a comfort to know whence your next five dollars are coming. Don't I know it? And yet . . . when you don't know, how like a meteor it flashes into view. And, you know, it always *does* come, somehow or other. I have a fairly good number of years' experience to back me when I say that.

The secret of it is, I suppose, that if you do what is up to you, some one—call it God if you like, call it Providence, or call it your neighbor—will do the rest, and you can't fall down. It is a comfortable working code, once you get it into your system.

Picture the *Padre Eterno,* like the benign old white-bearded gentleman in a nice blue dress the old masters loved to paint Him, patting you on the head, and saying: "My good little child, all that is required of you is to try to do something like your little best. Leave

the rest to me. Look at me. Don't I look as if I were to be trusted?"

.

Does any one but a Bohemian know the real pleasure of paying a bill? Mostly people know where the money lies waiting which will pay the dentist. You can't escape dentists' bills. You shouldn't. But you wonder how this necessity for a fresh white smile is to be paid for, and you a modest painter girl. And then . . . a friend from the West comes to lunch, and sees some pot-boiling candle shades you have made, and she likes them, and orders lots, and you are thrilled through and through, for that means that the dentist's bill is receipted.

Or you come back to town in the fall after a heaven-sent summer's rest. Your golden days of loafing are over, and black winter stares you in the eyes. Of course there is nothing to worry about, but there *is* the spasm of glee that catches your throat when a beautiful blonde young woman drops out of

the rainy heavens one day while you are darning your stockings, and orders two miniatures of her dear dead mother, one for herself and one for her brother.

The money for those is going to carry you half through the season.

Then again, you come home from Europe, and land in Hoboken with exactly four dollars in the world, and you go to your "uncle's" and "hang up" your belongings.

If you are a Bohemian you know that road to your uncle's, and your friends know the state of your strong box by the presence or absence about the premises of your valuables, if you have any. Your jewelry might be diagnosed as intermittent.

Well, then, you come home from Europe with four dollars, and borrow what you can of your uncle, and you go to a big hotel in the mountains, and there you get half a dozen portraits to do, and there you are, set up for the next long time. Those portraits wouldn't

be half the joy to do if they didn't mean fetching back your rings.

But, you say, suppose you *didn't* get the portraits to do? What is the use of supposing? You *do* get them.

And then the fun it is, the plain, unmixed *fun,* to have awfully little to do with but do it awfully well. *Any*body can look well and do things with money, but it takes an artist to do it on pretty nearly nothing.

The fun it is, just as you feel your clothes are getting to look a bit haggard, to have that blessed Eva Hawkes give you her million-dollar old-rose broadcloth dress!

And the fun it is, when you are feeling a bit down and blue, to have some one telephone and ask will you go to the opera and sit in the gallery. WILL you! And you sit in your gallery seat, and know you are having a better time than any one in the house. Often enough you are invited to sit in the best places, and you love it, and enjoy the space, and the near view of the stage, and good air. But if you

are a Bohemian, you don't mind the thousand or two stairs to climb, and you don't mind the fat German who sits behind you and has no room for his knees except the middle of your back, or the Italian next you, the menu of whose dinner is not difficult to guess. You are so glad you are there that nothing matters but that the music should be there too.

And if you have a rich dinner of cold sausage and cabbage salad, graham bread and Croton water one night, just imagine how the pheasant and champagne taste next night when you dine at the Mansfields'.

And then, as you look at a five-cent piece several times before you take a street-car, think what joy it is when you visit people who have carriages and automobiles, even though you *love* to walk.

All this for the blessedness of receiving. Is it necessary to speak of that of giving? Of the brimming of the heart when one has had a windfall in giving his share of it to the neighbor who is having hard luck? For bits

of luck drop out of the sky, and we only happen to catch them in our lap. If the next hand is extended in deeper need, the prize was meant for it, and it is a privilege to hand it where it belongs.

There have been moments when, as in a flash, the conviction has come to me that things would not be always as they are, that some day I should have large ease and plenty, though the how and when and whence are still in mist. But with the assurance came a sense of haste (doubtless quite unnecessary). Let me quickly, quickly get all there is to be got out of this precious poverty. Before it is over, let me discover and enjoy all there is in it. Let me enjoy the opportunity it gives of not caring at all whether the price of food is high or low. If it is low, well and good. If it is high, live on cheaper things, or do with less, or do without. Now, you might call that the exclusive prerogative of the rich, the not caring whether food is dear or cheap. But I maintain it is the privilege of the Bohemian.

If he has very few pennies to-day, he will buy bread and cheese—the price of those can never become ruinous—and if he has pennies to-morrow, he will have anything he likes, because he doesn't know how long those pennies have to last. There is always the chance of his having more to-morrow. If he has fewer, he can go back to bread and cheese, or just bread.

Ah, no! Let me never be anything but one of the Sparrows of the Lord. Let me only be a Little Sister of the Rich. But if in the course of human events it should be willed that I acquire much gold, let me spend it in becoming the Providence that gladdens the hearts of my glad brothers. Let me become a Big Sister to the Bohemians.

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Winter.

I've been looking over bundles of old letters, and I'm struck with a distressing point

in common among most of my correspondents.

What is *your* idea of the kingdom of heaven on earth? Mine—I'll tell you now—is the time when no one shall have any pet dislikes, when every one shall like everything and everybody.

I will, in my earthly paradise, generously permit people to have preferences—I'll stretch the point so far as to let them express a slight, but only a slight, leaning toward hearing the heavenly choir sing the Hallelujah Chorus rather than "No Wedding Bells for Me." But they mustn't be too emphatic about it. They must have room for "No Wedding Bells" and "Mah Coal Black Lady," too, or it won't be heaven.

There shall be no looking down on a neighbor's delight in Sousa Marches, done by talking machines.

I'll have no such speeches as: "Oh! You like Tschaikowsky's Pathétique? Seems to me so sensational"; or, "Yes; I do like Beethoven, but Mozart? Sugar and water!" What's

the matter with liking them all? They must all be likable—since *somebody* likes them.

Doesn't it make you sick, the thread of pride people manage to wind into their voices when they say: "I like big dogs, but not little dogs"; or, "I love horses and dogs, but I can't abide cats." When, after all, "we are of one blood—thou and I, brother."

They seem to feel there is something very precious about being precious. They accumulate and hoard their dislikes, and hug them to their hearts. They are the joy and pride of their lives.

This one admires Gothic architecture, but the Baroque style is nothing but ostentatious bad taste—and he likes blue, but pink is weak and bad and cheap. Well, certainly, sky and sea are of a lovely color, but what about daybreak carnations and palms of babies' hands?

One adores Fra Angelico, and wouldn't give Mr. Sargent houseroom. He dotes on Swinburne, and calls Wordsworth an old bore. He thinks Italy the last word in all that

is beautiful, but Switzerland is a hideous hole —likes travel by water but not by land—loves Stevenson, damns Henry James,—finally, seems to think that the point in giving attention to anything in any line is to compare and criticize, and not to squeeze out of it the very last drop of pleasure it affords.

It doesn't in the least follow because one loves the best that there is no room for the rest.

Why, what is the ultimate end in looking on at and taking part in this varied, glittering, gorgeous pageant, anyway? It seems not only so much saner, but so much easier to like things. I'm not saying but that murder is reprehensible and theft not to be encouraged. But *like* things. Like 'em all! Occupations, conditions, and moods and people and works!

At all events, it strikes me it would pay to try to travel in that direction at least, and not be forever propping up and adding to prejudices and antipathies.

You know about that old French lady and the spinach. She was so glad she didn't like spinach, because if she liked it she supposed she should eat it, and she loathed it! Well, there it is.

I don't pretend I haven't any dislikes, but I chalk myself a good mark just as often as I get rid of one. I've learned to like milk, and I've stopped dreading to ride in an elevator, and I'm *getting* to like Bach. Oh, yes! I'm getting there.

I knew a man once who said that his prayer was: "Lord, give me this day my daily opinion, and forgive me the one I had yesterday."

I think I shall make mine: "Give me my daily liking, and strengthen those I've already got."

Of course you will throw at me that it would be a deadly dull world in which every one agreed on every point. Well, perhaps; only, remember, this is my idea of heaven I'm talking about, not of a spicy world, and I don't know that any one ever pretended that

heaven would be an exciting place. Every one would be busy singing pæans in praise of God's works. I suppose the only line in which one could look for variety would be the millions of things to sing about.

I've a few more or less rabid dislikes left of my own, but I'm looking to the time when I can declare myself really catholic in taste, and let me tell you, I pray the Lord to hasten the day when I can truthfully say that I have any use for Palestrina and parsnips, whist, rum, spiders and golf.

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Spring.

Guinea, dear, you are a great comfort. I believe you are, like Jean, the only one of your kind. One can say what one likes to you, and it is like dropping a pebble into a bottomless pit, one never hears from it again. I mean by that, that there are no consequences; that you never pull one up short and make

one argue or give account of what one says or means. You understand. You accept it with a smile for what it is worth, and send one back your smiling reply, and give your own experiences and opinions which may or may equally agreeably not agree with one's own.

Are you keeping tab? *It's two years,* Guinea! And don't you love to think it will go on forever? *Let's* keep it up forever. Let's just sit like two demure China mandarins, nodding and smiling at one another at our thousand miles' distance, on and on and on, down through the long perspective of the years, on to the vanishing point.

But all things come to an end, you say. Yes, I suppose so! and I dare say the end of you, as far as I am concerned, will be that some fine day you'll up and get engaged to some girl or other. And then—she won't let you take the time to write me delightful, fat bundles of stuff—and then—you'll lock me up in a quiet little ornamental niche in your

heart (for I don't *believe* you'd throw me out altogether), and then—in time, you'll softly and silently forget me!

Well, please *tell* me when that girl appears, won't you? for she's *bound* to come, you know, though I hope she may be 'way off in the hazy, misty distance. I hope she's still in swaddling clothes; or, at worst, running around in sandals and frocks 'way above her knees.

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Spring.

Guinea!

Really! for an intelligent member of society you *do* occasionally say the most impossible things.

I rubbed my eyes and looked again at your letter, with its two astounding statements. I held it near, and then I held it off at arm's length, and couldn't make it look other than *queer.*

How will they look to you, your words, when I quote them, and you see them with a fresh eye in bald black and white, after a fair-ish number of days?

First: "I have always lived among those who looked up to me in one way or another. Do you know that you are the only woman I ever knew whom I respected intellectually? That's enough for autobiography. Is it too ugly?"

Ugly? Oh, you poor dear! God ha' mercy on you! I can just imagine the sort of fool women you've had to do with. Rich as mud, and *as* dull; or, no, not dull, for Americans are all more or less bright. But footless, maybe? inconsequent? And oh, how bad for you, my child, to have 'em all gazing up at you, and burning frankincense under your nose! You are to be wept over if your lot has been cast among women whom you so scorned as to make you respect my poor headpiece by comparison, for, Guinea, frankly, you know, as from one man to another, the

head ain't where I come out strong. You, maybe, haven't yet got on to how many kinds of a goose I can be, but it is only a question of time. That is a thing no amount of good will or modesty can conceal.

And now, second: "One of the ways I amuse myself is gambling. Are you addicted to the vice, or can't you afford it? I don't mean gambling in its grosser forms, but simply poker or bridge, among one's friends. Why is it that gambling and love-making are the only pastimes that have a permanent fascination for adults of civilized races?"

Guinea Golden! Honey Boy! What things to say!

No; I don't gamble. Not that I'm a bit too good to. I should, I dare say, gamble if I wanted to. I do plenty of other things I can't afford to, only it would bore me to death.

But to look upon love-making as a "pastime"! just another form of amusement!

Oh, very well! make love to me, then.

Splendid practice against the day that girl or other comes along. And it would, besides, be a nice *tour de force,* you know, something worthy of a Cyrano, to make love to a myth half a continent away. Something exquisitely dainty in appealing to her heart through the brain alone, without aid of look, or touch, or speech, with neither the remembrance nor the anticipation of the common modes of campaign.

Oh, go on, Guinea, do! I'm wild to see how you'd come out of it! You epicure! You lover of subtleties! *There's* a dish!

Usher in the Lover! What shall his name be? Not Romney, for it is not Romney Flagg who is to be my love, not the man I knew in Paris. I've clean forgotten him. Nor yet Guinea Golden, he's my best friend—my mental scrap-basket.

I know. His name, drawn from the same poem as Guinea's, shall be Pleiad.

> "I had a star in heaven,
> One Pleiad was his name."

Of course, the lost Pleiad was a gentleman! And, being of a roving disposition, he strayed away from his bunch of lady sisters and—I've found him!

How shall I wake him up, this star of a lover? In fairy tales and Wagner operas they awaken them with a kiss a yard or more long, don't they?

Well, then, herewith I send you a kiss. A kiss, let me see—

A kiss as sweet as the breath of pines.

As long as remorse.

As deep as the flood of the stars.

As elusive as the scent of violets.

As gay as a hollyhock.

As sad as twilight.

As fragrant as a bed of ferns.

As burning as the unexpected touch of ice.

As pure as the wind on the mountain top.

As tender as the song of days.

As fresh as the young sense of sweet.

As perfect as a pearl.

As never-to-be-forgotten as the first sight of the sea.

Now, *is* that a starter?

Are you off?

It has taken me full half an hour to improvise the above.

I don't know what to sign myself. Find me a name, please, a Greek one, to match Pleiad's.

The Night After.

Oh, Guinea!!

I had no sooner posted that wretched letter this morning than I realized that I ought never to have written, much less *sent* it.

Why, *why* I couldn't have stopped and questioned the wisdom of it before the mouth of the letter-box snapped at me, I don't know. The click of it seemed to do something to my head, and I stood stupidly at the street corner, saying to myself:

"You idiot! *What* will Romney Flagg think of you and your audacious invitation?"

What devil ever prompted it?

Please, dear boy, don't think ill of me that I should, for a fantastic hour, have offered to exchange my good friend for a spurious lover. Don't think that I don't appreciate the value of a real friend.

(Doesn't Olendorff, the infallible, assure us that *"Un ami sincère et vertueux est un trésor!"*)

You'll wonder what in the world my object could have been. Heavens! one doesn't have to look very far for an object to almost anything I do or say. *Curiosity,* my dear. Incurable daughter-of-Eve curiosity! Just the fun of seeing what the other fellow will do.

We are told that there are three games at which man may not play—life, love and death. Ah! but man does play at love. We all do; though perhaps not in cold blood. It is so hard to tell where the play leaves off and the earnest begins. And we all love love and lovers, and we do believe them for the nonce,

though we know they lie when they do swear that they are made of truth!

Please, please, please! destroy that horrid letter, and forget all about it.

And that reminds me. I don't believe I've ever told you my feeling about old letters. I mean those that *I* have written. I simply can't stand the thought of their accumulating and piling up, each a little piece of *me,* lying about at the mercy of chance. You never can tell who may some time misread them. Female relatives, future sweethearts, lady slavies, executors.

No letter has a right to live after it has served its term, and the term of a letter lasts until the following one has been received—no longer. So, if you've not already bravely killed mine after answering them, won't you please light a little bonfire?

I've had occasion to see old letters of mine. It was like seeing my own ghost. It frightened and sickened me.

Didn't I *tell* you I was all sorts of a fool?

Well, I'm crawling humbly enough about it. That ought to disarm you.

Meekly, oh, meekly!

G. G.

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Spring.

Just in time? Or too soon? Or too late? I can't tell which.

Ought my last letter to have gone soon enough to dam the flood of letters that Pleiad was sending, or should it not have gone at all, but let them flood?

Three letters from Pleiad! I read them over and over, and don't know whether to be sorry I have them, or sorry I wrote to stop more of them. Help me, Guinea, to decide. Had I waited twelve hours longer, I never in this world should have found the courage to write, countermanding the "audacious invitation"; for, nice as you are, Guinea, you know Pleiad is awful fetching, and I might have

thrown you over for him. I might not have been able to bring myself to stick to you quite so faithfully and unfalteringly as I did—as I do!

You see, after all, my virtue was rewarded. I sent my penitent letter, spite of certain regretful twinges at surrendering the lover, and then, next morning, I awoke to have my curiosity satisfied when Pleiad's first note was brought me with my breakfast. Two others followed in the course of the next day.

I *am* satisfied, Guinea. My curiosity as to just how cleverly you would carry on the game is appeased. I don't think you need any course of study against the day of writing to that "girl or other." I think, you know, that girl is going to be in luck, for Pleiad will write her sweet things which his true heart shall dictate—not faked up out of the back of his head, and if he is able to put such a prettily sincere ring into the fascinating lies he tells me, how delicious he'll be when he is in earnest. Happy girl!

I quite hate to brush Pleiad aside, even though I like you best, Guinea, since you are real and he is imitation, and so I'm going to ask you to give him some messages from me, will you? Tell him, in the first place, that he is very dear, and then tell him that I love him (he wished to be reassured as to that, you know, and I know you won't be jealous). Then tell him that he must never, *never,* NEVER attempt to see me face to face. Can't he see, can't *you* see, that that would end everything, spoil everything? Why, it wouldn't do at *all!* Tell him to continue to think of me as his "Lady o' Dreams," and then—tell him—to write me again—some time—some day—LONG hence! I would not exchange you for him, but—he might, just once in a way, send word; for love is so good—even the most shadowy semblance of it. Do you remember Marguerite in *"La Dame aux Camélias,"* when she speaks to Gustave, who has just told her that he is about to marry Nichette: *"Aime la bien—mon bon Gustave—*

c'est si bon d'être aimé!" It is good to be loved, and it is best to love.

Tell him that I shall think of him whenever I see "lilacs glimmering white in the moonlight, or burning with mysterious red glow under the lamps," that I shall think of him whenever I am arrested by that annual "intense, instantaneous, penetrating sense of other springs gone by."

Tell him that I shall be with him whenever I see, or hear, or feel anything beautiful and sacred, and so shall, in a way, share it with him.

And that is enough of messages for Pleiad —and that last *is* rather a large order!

And did *you* think the kiss theatrical? It hadn't struck me. I should call it rhetorical rather than dramatic, wouldn't you? It seemed to trouble Pleiad, and he wished to be reassured about that, too, but I don't see how I can reassure him, for I don't believe he would have considered a literary kiss any im-

provement whatever on a theatrical one, do you?

And about that kiss! What amusing discoveries editors of collected letters must often make! Were any one to attempt that sort of thing with my general correspondence, after I am long dead, he would chuckle as he ran across that kiss in its various stages of evolution. It started out in life a modest little thing of only three attributes; it swelled to five—and see to what proportions Pleiad's had jumped. And that *may* not be the end of it! You never can tell. Pen kisses are most serviceable assets.

Well, good-night, Guinea, Golden Friend, for whom I resigned the lover who was not.

What a pretty name he found me! I hate to resign that, too.

It is a bit difficult to write it in its Greek lettering. So I sign

PHILOTA.

G. G., Broadway, New York, to R. F. at Home.

Spring.

(*G. G. speaks very loud:*)

Make him stop, Guinea! Make him stop! or soon I shall have no voice, but an exasperated squeal in which to bid you tell him to stop. Who *is* he? What *is* this Pleiad of the entrancing verses and the darling letters? What is this spirit I have conjured up? Who is it that has power to make me dream for three whole days and nights, and long to come from "my far castle in the sky" and confess,

> "While cheeks flush red and hearts beat fast,
> It is so fair, the Earth!"

My castle isn't in the sky (shades of Broadway)! Nor are mine "star flowers," but oh, how prettily he put it, Guinea!

Tell him to stop! Make him stop! He has nothing to do with you or me or the case. He is a myth—a fabrication. He has nothing to do with my friend of the frank and truthful

temper, and comfortable understanding, my *amico simpatico,* even less with that shadowier personage of years ago, the big, imposing, something chill neighbor-at-table, whose eyes I never remember to have seen smile.

Good gracious! No! He is so far from you both, he belongs to another race.

(*G. G. whispers very low:*)

Lordy! How I should love to think that I should wake up to find another long letter in the morning, and the next morning, and the next, and the next—and *all* mornings!

(*G. G. shouts:*)

BUT IT MUST NOT, SHALL NOT BE! for *what,* oh, *who* is Pleiad?

G. G., B'WAY, TO R. F. AT HOME.

Spring.

NO!

The pretty little comedy of Love-Me-Love-Me-Not is over.

OVER! Leaving no regrets behind, tho' I can't help sighing at the thought of all those

potential unwritten letters of Pleiad's, which he assures me were to have shown even more his versatility, were to have been yet tenderer, more impassioned, more light-hearted!

Ah, me! Do you know how rare they are, the men who can write love letters? Picturesque, entrancing ones, I mean. Not one in seven thousand knows how to write, or, for that matter, say more than "I love you," and emphasize it by repetition *ad lib.*, and by proof of deed, maybe. The rarity of one who can ring the soft fifty changes on that same theme "I love you!"

And Pleiad could! . . . did!

But . . . now listen:

There was once a Lady and a Bear.

This Lady was wont to hold converse with this Bear, (he was a Polar Bear,) principally about Honey, for even Ladies and Bears have some tastes in common. One day the Bear inadvertently spoke of Dancing, and the Lady in derision cried out: "Dance, then, since you speak so lightly of the Art!"

Well, the Bear danced, and his performance greatly astonished the Lady, so much so that she was pleased to say that he danced very prettily—indeed, she joined the dance herself for a measure or two. But ere it was fairly started the Lady, who had expected entertainment of a different sort, exclaimed: "Hold—it is unseemly—I spoke but in jest!" And the Bear, who was a wise Bear, I trust, and knew as well as the Lady whither such Dances led . . . obediently ceased.

Now when it was all over . . . neither could tell whence came the music to which they had danced . . . and sometimes the Music haunted her . . . and him . . . But pray remember: *The Dance was over!*

Yes, it *is* hard to be reconciled to Pleiad and Philota being lost and gone forever.

Departed spirits are said to return once a year. We have an All Saints' Day and an All Souls' Day. Why not an All Lovers' Day? One on which our Lovers shall come back in

the form of one of those letters that "were to have been."

They might write to one another on that same day, and it should be their perfumed task, like thrifty bees throughout the year, to collect honey from all that there is of sweet with which to freight that one letter with rapture.

Say, when falls All Lovers' Day?

When the lilacs are in flower?

G. G., B'WAY, TO R. F., AT HOME.

Spring.

Two All Lovers' Days in the year? You are right. A year *is* a long space to wait.

Very well. . . . The first Memorial Day shall fall at the time of withered leaves.

It is certainly meet and very right that as to each saint *one* day in the year is dedicated, so *two* days in the year should be devoted to lovers, for are there not in each case two lovers?

G. G., AT HOME, TO R. F., AT HOME.

Summer.

Oh, Guinea! It's so good to be home again. I was so worn out when I left New York, I was dizzy. But immediately I started, all seemed to fall from me like a garment. Daisy blew me a stateroom on the train, I hated so to put Mick in the baggage-car, and on the road I felt like a weed in a summer shower, and was almost myself before arriving in Boston.

Dear Boston! I believe for the first time in my life, though I am native there and to the manner born, I did it justice, and fell victim to its charm. It was so restful, so seemly, civilized and decent, after that delirious, ill-bred New York.

I felt like an Elegy in a Country Churchyard.

I had myself taken to the Pop Concert as being the most devilish thing the town afforded, to let myself down easy, and I almost wept for tenderness. On the stage—those

dear old Symphony Orchestra duffers whose faces I've known from a child—there they were, much the same as ever, playing like the Lord's own angels, and all about, orderly nondescript-looking people at the little tables, drinking proper drinks and, one felt sure, talking such proper talk!

And then the Public Library. I had to go and have a look at it, and on the benches in the court there sat the same studious, ruminative, scholarly looking folks as of yore; somehow they only grow in Boston.

Certainly the flavor of Boston is mighty sweet and dignified, tho' it maybe does pucker up one's mouth a little bit. The Puritan Gladys was soothed and comforted, as the Bohemian is intoxicated by New York.

But it is good to be Home! It makes me so deeply grateful for having two ears, two eyes, a nose and a mouth, also two legs and a love of walking. The days are one sweet succession of . . . the same old things. You know what I do down here.

And, oh, Guinea, the hours of lying in the cool wind on the long empty sand, listening, and watching the sea's innumerable laughter!

G. G., AT HOME, TO R. F., AT HOME.

Summer.

Don't talk to me about "Tears, idle tears!" Tears idle? Just listen here: If a child wants anything badly, what, from its cradle up, does it do but cry for it? And doesn't it the better part of the time get it? I'm not saying that it is in all cases right it should, but that it does. Neither am I saying that throughout life it is to stand before the object of its desire, shed tears, and then reach out its hand and receive the prize. Wouldn't it be funny to see people at every street corner and show window gazing with tearful eyes at whatever it was they wanted!

No, but tears do seem to stand as symbol for wanting very much something that one seems in danger of not getting. And some-

how, if we seriously want things enough to cry if we don't get them, it seems likely that some one, other things being equal, will at sight of our tears provide us with our heart's desire.

I know of two cases, one that of a man and one of a woman, both of them about as far removed from weaklings, from incompetents, as anything you can picture, both of them pillars of society, real ones, and they each at a crisis, got what they wanted (the man wanted a large loan, the woman wanted a job) by being unable to keep back the tears when they were told they couldn't be accommodated with what they knew they had to have.

Not long ago I, myself, had to do a very large piece of work. I had to make a house in great haste. It was a complicated piece of business, and there were times when it seemed as if I had undertaken the impossible.

Nothing helped me through tight places so often as Mirabeau's good word: *"Impossible? Ne me dites jamais ce bête de mot!"*

Every one's advice was: "Do your best, and never mind about the result. If you fail it won't be your fault, so don't worry about it."

I've been guilty of giving that advice myself. I never shall again; it irritated me so to hear it. What! do my best and then be resigned to failure? Scarcely.

Do my best, yes; but care, *care,* CARE! Care so much that one dismal, drizzly, sticky Tuesday morning, when everything either went wrong or was at a dead standstill, I retired to my tents and sat on the floor and howled like a fool, in full hearing of the sixty workmen about the place.

I didn't do it with an eye to dramatic effect. I had to do it because the case was desperate and my heart was breaking. That house had to be *done,* done most remarkably well, and just as quickly, nay, quicker than possible. It was literally a case of life and death, and there seemed no power on earth that could make those sixty carpenters, painters, paperers, electricians, plumbers, and Ital-

ians at work on the grounds realize it and feel it but the sound of my sure-enough crying.

The various heads of departments got together thereupon, and when I came down, sodden eyed, I found them holding council of war. As I reappeared the contractor, dear man, spoke, nervously rubbing the back of his head with his hand: "Well . . . well . . . well I guess we just got to keep a-goin'."

From that hour I needed no longer stalk the place like a caged panther urging and hurrying on the work. I knew that every man had full steam on. And they "kep' a-goin' " until the thing was done.

Nor need you think that it was because I was a woman and these workingmen had chivalrous hearts in their sides. They *were* chivalrous gentlemen, but though I may be better and wiser, I'm not half so young or good looking as I used to be.

Now what I mean is that it doesn't matter what anybody wants. I'll repeat that, I don't

know how else to be specially emphatic. *It doesn't matter what anybody wants,* whether it is a cab or a meal, or a fortune, or a husband, or to be good, if they want it enough they will get it, whatever it is. If they don't get it, it is because they didn't want it enough. And as Goethe says something somewhere to the effect that as what we want in youth we shall assuredly come by in age, and Emerson adds that such being the case it behooves us to be careful what we elect to want, so I say that as we are bound to get what we want, if we want it enough not to be able to help crying for it, if it looks as if we couldn't have it, we've got to be very particular what we cry about!

Tears idle? Tears are as busy as a bee!

G. G., Home, R. F., Home.

Summer.

I write you to-day in great joy—jubilant!

I have found me a great new friend, and what is more splendid than a new friend?

You have said that you felt yourself free to tell me things, feeling sure of a certain shadowy understanding and sympathy. I must do the same, for I want to shout to some one in my glee over my great "find."

Years and years ago some one gave Kitty the works of Walt Whitman. I opened them, tasted them, and promptly spat them out, and, with the arrogant self-sufficiency of extreme youth, condemned them utterly, and relegated them to a high, dark, unreachable mental shelf.

This spring, in a collection of verse, I ran across the "Song of the Open Road." That was enough. When I got here, I took down the exiled volumes, and oh, my dear, I could talk about them all night, only what's the use, when they are there, and speak for themselves louder than any one can for them?

He is like this Cape landscape, all big sky, and big sea, and great booming wind and surf. He gives one such a sense of freedom and joy! How he does strip the rags from every

scare-crow. He "wears his hat as he pleases, indoors or out!" How great and fearless and loving he is! How he embraces everything, from the highest to the meanest object in creation. How universal, how childlike and naïf and humorous he is! How vigorous and wise and calm!

Is it not beautiful, the way people inevitably come to one, when one is prepared to receive them? "Oh, believe as thou livest, that every sound that is spoken over the round world which thou oughtest to hear will vibrate in thine ear. Every proverb, every book, every word that belongs to thee for aid or comfort shall surely come home through open or winding passages. Every friend whom not thy fantastic will, but the great and tender heart within thee craveth . . ."

And all the rest of it.

I don't know which is nicer, the way wise people like that one find out things and tell one all about them, or the way one finds out the truth for oneself in course of time. Seems

as if—give us time, and there is time a-plenty with all eternity ahead—we were, after all, stupid and stubborn and lazy as we mostly are, all going to learn all about everything. How good to eventually know all about it, this perplexing world with its blind alleys and black holes! And W. W. makes you feel so sure that it is very right, as indeed do all the great fellows, don't they?

When I come down here, my delight is pulling down great armfuls of my cronies from their shelves, and carrying them out to spend the day in the hammock when all the chores are done. And there I dip and browse here and there, reviving old impressions, occasionally gathering in a new one. . . .

There are two others beside W. W. whom I specially love, and whom you must love, for one loves one's friends to love one's friends. One is Emily Dickinson, the other the Shropshire Lad, A. E. Housman is his name.

She also is one of those unhampered ones, who recognize no convention, is most espe-

cially herself. She has a most insinuating charm, combinations of words of hers creep into one's brain and become fixed in one's vocabulary, and no others will express the shade of meaning so well.

As for the Shropshire Lad! The things he makes you feel by saying the simplest things in the simplest way! Once you know him, never again can you see mirroring water without saying to yourself:

"Ah fair enough are sky and plain,
But I know fairer far;
They are as beautiful again
That in the water are . . ."

Nor will a spring pass without your realizing:

"Since to look at things in bloom
Fifty Springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go,
To see the cherry hung with snow."

G. G., Home, R. F., Home.

Summer.

What you say of the "miraculous quality" being a test of poetry, only goes one step

further to fix my idea of W. W. I don't know that I have thought of his things as poetry exactly—chants rather.

You don't find any miracle in them? I don't know what it is more fit to call the buoyant elation with which I am filled after reading him.

You must know that I don't swallow him whole, that I, too, wince at much of him, that his language and construction grate, that I am tortured by this vulgar phraseology, but . . . as he himself says:

> "The words of my book . . . nothing,
> The drift of it . . . everything!"

And the drift of it! How it makes one walk more erect, breathe deeper!

Don't call him insincere! How can you? Laugh at his "rude barbaric yawp" and welcome! But sincerity you shall grant him! Could anything but a life of love of his fellows have produced his work? You don't believe he loved them all the time? Are you

going to wonder at that? By what will you judge people? Their low or their high water marks? Every human creature must have hours, days of discouragement with himself and every one else, of mental and spiritual nausea. Even "Nature sometimes like us is caught without her diadem"—but it isn't fair to throw that at them as long as that is not the mood they admit, or foster, or cherish, or entertain, and certainly W. W. is pretty consistent in his Hymns of Praise!

You know, your attitude with regard to him makes me think of that of the Man of Sense in a verse I saw long ago, written *à propos* of the Yellow Book. The last lines of it ran:

"Some said 'How clever,' some, 'How vile,'
The Man of Sense 'twixt yawn and smile
Just voted it a bore!
This Yellow Book of meaning dim
A yellow nuisance was to him,
And it was nothing more."

Now I think of it, I'm ready to bet large moneys that as you don't like W. W., you did

like the contents of the Yellow Book, and all that harvest of funny little Chap-books that flourished at the same period. Deny it!

I'm glad you like Emily Dickinson somewhat and loved the Shropshire Lad, even though you quarrel with his unmanly much talk of dead men. It seems to me rather in character. He *is* but a Lad, and don't you think the late teens and early twenties given to that sort of harping? It is the saddest time in life, the most likely to be morbid. Dear, dear! When I remember my black moods at nineteen! When I was so acutely aware of my dual nature, of being rather a good sort of a little willing Horse hitched in harness with a balky little brute of a Donkey. When I think of the agony I went through before I got accustomed to driving that ill-assorted team, Myself, I wonder I'm here writing to you unsuicided. Yes, there was a bottle of allopathic aconite in mother's medicine cupboard. I have spent hours in dark brooding over that bottle. Don't laugh other than in-

dulgently at the moods of Things in their Teens.

I have a theory, do you know, that one feels older at the end of one decade than at the beginning of the next. One is old for one class at twenty-nine, at thirty-one one is young for the next. I have an uncanny foreboding that at sixty-one I shall feel so juvenile that I shall up and marry a boy in his twenties who will beat me, and sell all me jools, and serve me jolly right.

To Pleiad, at the Time of Falling Leaves.

Pleiad Beloved! I could not write before. I tried, but there was so much I dared not tell you, the repression of which made my words sound hollow and perfunctory. But since your letter has come I *have* to write. *C'est plus fort que moi!* And why should one hesitate to speak one's heart to a star? "In their distance stars are near us, while in their nearness men are far."

Oh, my Love! You can never know what your letter meant to me. How I longed for it, craved it, *died* waiting for it! How should you? You could not guess all that it would bring me. You could not know that I was holding out beseeching hands to you for help, help from my own weakness. That at night, out under the silent stars, I was calling to you: "Pleiad! Pleiad! Help me! Do not let me fall into that most grim of horrors—a loveless marriage!"

I have times of knowing that it cannot come to pass. I know it is impossible that I being I should finally surrender. But the pressure is so cruel at times. The force of gold in dazzling quantities, and—should I blush to own it? Your Philota is not above a love of ease, and the good things of life, and the frocks and frills and exquisite appointments that go with a great fortune.

I *know* it cannot really happen finally, but at times, Pleiad, I am so afraid, so afraid! For the strength of the chain is that of its

weakest link, and perpetual dropping finally wears away a stone, even a stony heart, and the will opposing mine is one used to overriding mighty obstacles.

And so I called to you, "Help me to strengthen the tottering bridge of my will, that it may carry me over this black pitfall. Make me to realize what Love and Life might mean, spent upon the heart of one whose qualities of mind and soul could fill the entire imagination! My Phantom Lover! Hold me with arms more restraining, with voice more commanding, with eyes more magnetic, with lips more compelling than any of mortal man of flesh!"

And then . . . thank the generous gods, your letter came! Your wonderful letter, answering all my prayer, and making this a different world!

The hours that you picture, spent together away from everything and everybody, entirely at one, without shadow of past or to come . . . Paradise!

No, beloved, nor soon, nor late, nor *ever* shall we meet. I could not face you now. Last year it might still have been. I could have borne it smiling, but not now. We shall never see one another. Were you in the next room, and I hungering and aching for you, I would turn and run away. How I should dread to know that—well, my pen was mightier than I! Should you not be sorry for me were I to find myself, my words, and smiles not strong to equal my own written ones?

No; if we were to have met, it should have been long ages past, maybe when we lived in the glory of Greece. Then we would have met and loved in deep-shaded laurel groves. Or when you were the king of Babylon and I was a Christian Slave. Or later, in the tragic Middle Ages, or even in the vapid period of powder and patches we should have wandered about the moonlit paths of a trim garden and exchanged superficial, easily broken vows.

But . . . how should we meet to-

day? In the first place, it would not in the very least be you and I who should meet, but those two very commonplace young mortals, G. G. and R. F.

He in irreproachable cloth and linen would call at 8.30 of an evening upon her in her best gown. They would meet in a warm, comfortable, much berugged, bepictured, becushioned lamplit room, meet with the short, emphatic American handshake. He would sit at ease in a big armchair, she on a divan, and there for two or three hours they would discuss everything under the light of Heaven, from the price of coal, and comparative merits of this or that brand of cigarettes, through plays, books, music, pictures, sociology, philosophy, and on out of sight through psychology. Then again the hearty good comrade handshake, *"et puis, 'Bonsoir'!"* and there an end!

Oh, Pleiad! say you would not have it so? Let us remain wise for them! Our wisdom is not folly. You must not call it so!

We shall not see pictures, hear music, read together in your dear blue room. You will not talk to me and tell me the things you never dared tell any one. We shall not walk or ride together, nor travel and see the strange far lands and the walled cities crowned with towers in the dark hills of Umbria. Nor shall we watch the sunrise, or the moon drop low upon the water. But, shall we not in a sense divide every beauty in the universe? Will not the nightly wonder of the first star in Heaven bring our thoughts rushing together? You will not kiss me—but can you not imagine it more vividly than another could achieve?

Above all, do not call our love wasted! When was Love—True Love—ever wasted?

You say you need me . . . need me . . . But, dear one, you *have* me! You and you only know Philota. For what is Philota? A Fancy hovering in the Mind of a Shadow. And what is Pleiad? A Dream living in the Heart of a Myth.

And is it not of all things the most wonderful and radiant and mysterious that you, your very self, you who are emphatically *not* R. F., that you who are the very breath and soul of Love should be turning the tide and shaping events in the life of G. G. by making for yourself an existence in the spirit of Philota?

The marvel of it! For so it is! You have —you are saving her from— . . . let me not think from what!

You say you love me so greatly that it does not matter whether I love you or not—but—my own—I do . . . I do . . . I do . . .

G. G. to R. F.

Autumn.

Tut—Tut! No fair. That's not in the Game—not until Lilac Time!

G. G., B'way, R. F. in California.

Winter.

The way winters have of coming to an end before they have more than fairly begun!

And nothing to show for them! Yet here is spring almost in sight. Month after month has gone by, bringing no great change in this existence so ever changing in minor details, full of variety—yet variety of one order and weight, bringing no very fresh or vital new element or impression.

I'm so glad to hear you are in California. When this letter reaches you you will have had many weeks' sun bath; it is leaving me in a belated blizzard, which makes your place sound all the lovelier. And you are making an Italian Garden! And in California, as I remember it, things grow for you while you wait, overnight, so that you'll see the result of your many inventions and toil, and not your descendants alone after you.

I was in California once, in your very town, a whole winter long. I wore nothing for my five months out there but riding clothes and evening dress.

I learned to ride out there. I was a kid of seventeen, and another kid taught me to do all

sorts of circus tricks. I blanch at the memory of the things I dared do at his bidding. We rode every day and all day, sometimes *en cavalcade,* with lots of people, but mostly with two or three others, or by ourselves.

And the horse I had! Oh, my Billy, my Billy! I wonder if he's still living and racing about with some other girl on his back! Ask for him, will you, at Cardozo's Stable, and give him sugar and spice and everything nice for me! Billy was the sweetest thing in horses, part broncho, but also part excellent racing blood. It was not so much that he was rapid, but that he was so light he barely touched the ground. His hoofs flicked the hard-packed sand on the beach. You could tell the print of his little shoes from any other horse's, they were so faint and small. Where other horses pounded, he fluttered, he almost floated. I never hope to experience anything so near the sensation of flying, as when we raced along the beach. Oh, the music of the hoofs, and the smell of the kelp, and the thun-

der of the surf, and the singing of the wind in my ears and hair, and the feel of the air wrapping me 'round as we shot along. Billy never needed urging, at my cluck he was an arrow let free. He loved to carry me, as I loved to be carried; he seemed to love his own motion as much as ever I did, and to love me as I did him. When I was not sitting on his back, I was to be found sitting in his manger, occupied with feeding him barley-beards, and he had the coziest way of putting his nose on my chest, and making that friendly confidential sound: "Hum-hum-hum-hum-hum-hum-hum-hum-hum-hum-hum—" beginning on a high note and hum-ing all down the scale.

Oh, seventeen! seventeen! The very beginning of things! How bitterly old it makes one feel to remember!

But, do *you* tell *me* about *your* time out there. Do you ride much, or do you eternally sit at Bridge? What do you do beside make Gardens? Do you make love in them? Do you play with your fellow men and women?

With *a* fellow-woman? Is that Girl around yet?

Tell me . . . tell me *all* about it!

G. G., B'WAY, R. F., CALIFORNIA.

Winter.

Do you know, I think mice are an awful problem. As serious as a lot that are made much more row about. Quite as serious to most of us as—well—what are the things that people are all the time getting serious about? Race problems, and race suicide, and yellow dangers, children and servants. We don't all of us have servants and children, but not many of us escape mice!

Now let me tell you:

Last summer when we went home to the Cape and opened the house, we found that the winter had witnessed a tragedy. The two doors leading upstairs had been left open when we closed the house the autumn before. Either the wind, or the carpenter coming to make repairs, had closed them, and crowded

against the door of the front staircase we found six dead mice, at the foot of the back stairs four! Poor, tiny things! We found their nests, made of cotton-batting which they had pulled out of a roll in the attic, one on my bed, and one in Kitty's bureau drawer. And everywhere we found little heaps of the shells of wild-cherry stones, of which they had laid in stores. I dare say they had elected to live in the upper story, because even in winter it is warm under the roof when the sun beats on the timbers overhead. I suppose they died from lack of water, or else their provisions gave out. Anyway, for all that season, sad as we were at their fate, we were joyously free of mice.

This summer when we went home, the house was overrun with them. We decided to bear with them. After all, mice neither take much room, nor much food; neither had we found them so very destructive. Our tolerance made them very fearless and tame. I have seen one come out of the brick oven and

perch on the edge of the dogs' bowl and drink while we were sitting at table!

Finally, however, it was borne in upon us that mice are untidy things, and that if you let them alone they will grow to such numbers as to make home unfit to live in.

For days we discussed what to do. We determined to try the fabled remedy of writing the mice a kind letter of warning, and giving them a chance of their lives. Kitty composed the notice, which ran:

Warning is hereby given to all mice, rats, and creatures whatsoever, infesting these premises, that if they forthwith evacuate all holes, wainscots and other habitations—good! If not, measures of the sternest will be taken by the owners of said premises to rid said premises of said mice, rats and other creatures.

Signed,

K. Gay,

G. Gay,

Owners.

This we wrote on a full sheet of notepaper in a clear, very legible hand. We posted it on a bill-file, and stood the file on the dining-room hearth.

There it was in full view for three days and three nights. But the mice in pride of life only chuckled in their holes.

Then was a trap bought! And set . . . !

Next morning two wee things were found in it, caught under their poor chins, the most tragic expression of agony frozen on their wretched little faces. With its front paws one of them seemed struggling to push away the brutal spring.

We buried them down near the fence, on the edge of the grove behind the house. We carried them wrapped in bits of an old handkerchief for winding-sheets. Very lovely winding-sheets embroidered with festoons of daisies. Over the graves we planted two pansies to mark the spot.

Next morning there were two more. These we buried in a box. Kitty thought it would

be truly gratifying to them to know that their coffin marked them as "High Grade Mirror Candies." Over them waved a sprig of Bouncing Betty.

And so from day to day the row of graves with their flowery marks grew, filled with baby mice, and Father and Mother mice, until the day dawned that we caught no more—because in all the house there was not one to catch.

Well then, after that we had a great revulsion of feeling. We had taken too many dead mice out of traps. We had seen enough of mice we had killed! As we looked at them we could not help marveling at their totty paws, and fine, fine whiskers, and polished eyes, and plushy coats. We were at a loss to think of anything quite so pretty that we knew how to manufacture.

In the fall I rescued one from drowning in a pail. I could set a trap, but how can any one let a mouse drown?

What to do with the thing!

I bought him a cage, one with a wheel, and he ran splendid journeys in it. He loved to run all night long, until I had to stick a hat-pin through the wheel to keep it stationary. There was no sleeping with it whirring. I made him a cotton-wool bed, and gave him a china water-color pan to drink out of, and he was a happy mouse, I think, and died a happy death, over-eating delicious corn.

After that, one day, Kitty was going down Broadway with Mick, and a man came up to her with a live baby mouse in his hand.

"May I give this to your dog?"

"You may give it to *me*," said Kitty, a little grimly. Likely she'd feed Mick a live mouse!

She took it in her hand. The poor little wretch was paralyzed with fright, and lay perfectly still. Now she had taken it, Kitty had her turn at deciding a mouse's fate.

She reasoned: "If I take it to the Park and let it go, it will freeze. If I take it home, it will probably be caught eventually, and any-

way, that is no fair. If I take it to a small provision shop, the shop's cat will eat it" . . . and so she went on, making suggestions and rejecting them.

What she did was to go to the grocery section of a large department store, and place the mouse unobtrusively behind a big case of Uneeda Biscuits.

This may sound a very immoral tale, but this is how she argued:

"If this is the only mouse in the establishment, why . . . there is no harm done. Where there is but one mouse, there is but one mouse. And if there are already others, why then . . . one more . . . one less . . . !

G. G., B'WAY, R. F., CALIFORNIA.

Winter.

I have just come in from hearing "Parsifal" for the first time.

I don't think I could talk about it to most people, perhaps to no one but you. Yet to

some one I must speak from an over-full heart. I couldn't discuss it. It is a thing to revere, not to discuss, any more than a Church Service is to be discussed.

Oh, that Vorspiel! It wouldn't matter much what came after it, the spell is laid upon one, the enchantment. If you have ears to hear, you have understood it all before the play begins, before the curtain rises upon the pleasant scene of the old knight under the tree.

What a quality the music has! The quality of fervent mediæval religion, the quality of devoutness made into sound.

The music, the performance, the intensity of my emotion while listening have left me exhausted. I, like Kundry, should like to sink down on a flight of convenient white marble property steps, at the foot of the Altar where glows the Grail, and breathe my very, very last!

Don't you wish you could believe that when the end comes, it might be the end indeed? I wish I could—and I can't! I suppose it is

too deeply ingrained, the belief, nay, the knowledge, that this life is merely a tiny section of the unbeginning, unending soul of us. But I wish some one would convince me to the contrary. I have moments of such intense weariness at the thought of eternity, of the enforced progress that we must make, willy-nilly, of the advance through the Ages to final perfection, the advance which, if we do not hasten on now yet must be made, if not now, later, some time, from which there is no escape. "Oh, God in Heaven," I cry, "exterminate, annihilate me, spare me the long, long, long, long road to your Divinity! I'm willing enough to worry along here, trying to be the best sort of poor beggar I can, but for the love of Mercy let it end here!"

Don't accuse me of going back on all I have said of the glory, and beauty, and privilege of life! I repeat it all—I love life, every instant of it, but when it ends I shall have had enough! Perhaps because I have been so happy all my life long I should be ready to

leave the game now without the feeling that I had been defrauded.

"Ne plus rien connaître,
Ne rien souvenir,
Ne jamais renaître
Ni me rendormir,
Ne plus jamais être,
Mais en bien finir,
Voilà mon desir!"

G. G., B'way, R. F., at Home.

Spring.

Dear Old Guinea!

How I laughed over your letter! If it was meant to cheer me out of the dumps I wrote in last, it served its end. But it wasn't dumps ailed me, you know, it was "that tired feeling" raised to the power where counting vanishes beyond human grasp and comprehension. I am not proud of the mood, and it is not a frequent one, but the fact is, living is a wearying process at best, and when one is a woman working for a livelihood, the weariness sometimes gets ground in too deep, that's all.

At any rate, I'm feeling cheerful enough

to-day—for why? You'd never guess! I'm going to Italy, to Montoro, for the whole summer, for six good months! It is like a fairy-tale, it is a miracle. It seemed too wild a thing ever to hope, when Lady Grey's invitation first came, but it is coming true, and I know just how the raven-fed prophet felt!

I never recover from the wonder of my amazing good fortune! The way things spring up in my path like Hindoo magician's flowers! First a bid to come to the rarest place on earth. That is all very well, but how to get there? The staunchest pedestrian of my acquaintance can't walk the seas. It looks as if I'd have to stay at home. What then? By the funniest circuitous route comes a gift of a passage to Europe and back by North German Lloyd Line! You see, that is the form of sea-walking Faith takes to-day! And then? For to visit among the quality one must be properly clad—why then, for one thing, work, orders for miniatures gush out of the rocks, and then the most compli-

cated coincidences fill my wardrobe. So-and-so gives me a braw blue hat, all nodding plumes, it doesn't become her, it does me. Good hat, but it doesn't *seem* to go with any particular article of raiment I own; and then, like the tramp, I hold up a button to the Provider of Clothes, above, and ask will He kindly furnish me a shirt to sew on to it, and from a remote source, the Provider, whose ears are needles, produces a blue cloth suit, a new one, a darling, it matches the hat, seems made for it! So-and-so has gone into mourning, will I accept this thing? Now if it were any one but me it wouldn't fit, but it is *me*—so it fits! And so it goes! If nothing else were to hint to me what a fool I am, it would be this question of luck. It's the richest thing! Bank accounts are nothing to it!

Yes, next month I sail away in a big ship, and go to the wonder of wonders, Montoro, to be idle . . . oh, as for being idle! Watch me! And there I shall renew my youth, and leave behind me the drawn, hag-

gard, wrinkled feelings, and saturate myself in perfume and melody—(the nightingales sing at Montoro day as well as night!).

You'd better come, too! I SAY, wouldn't it be nice! It would be so nice, Guinea, that in the words of G. Burgess, "I thank God on my knees you are not to be there!" Think of it, will you? If you were suddenly to do the mad, delightful, impossible, forbidden—(mind, forbidden) thing!

Days when it is not too hot I mean to go down into Florence and copy Titian's portrait of the Duke of Norfolk in miniature. I am madly in love with him, you know, that is, as much of me as is not in love with Pleiad and Jean de Reszke. He is in good company, isn't he? But think, while I painted, you could read to me in a very low undertone, and toward five o'clock we would go to Giacosa's and have tea and brioches, or vermouth and seltzer and *pasticcini.* And then the walks about Montoro! There is a ruined chapel there, such a sweet!

Isn't the spring a wonder! One never gets used to it, but it seems to me never before have I known it so early, so balmy, so tender. The florist shops won't let me pass by. I stand with my nose glued to the pane. . . . There are evening crocuses, a pinky lilac, they are Kitty's soul, a pink not too gay, a lilac not too sober. There are clouds of azaleas of flesh color, pale yellow with a suggestion of pink flush, like thin flame, like fire seen by daylight, they are the color of my soul.

What color is yours? A frank green nicely shading into blue?

By the way, Pleiad's letter will be due just about the time I arrive in Italy . . . for the sweet-breathed Lilac Time is coming! Like Emily, I'd wind the months away in balls the quicker to come to the day of his letter!

G. G., B'WAY, R. F., AT HOME.

Spring.

I'm sailing on Thursday. Every cupboard and drawer and box in the place is pouring

forth my belongings. I have a new trunk the size of a block of houses. Poor porters!

Shall I miss you a little sometimes? Why no, frankly, how should I? I shall miss Guinea's letters if he doesn't write, Pleiad I cannot miss, for him I wear in my heart of hearts, him I have with me always, but miss you, R. F.? How should I? You were so long ago!

You accuse me of infidelity to Titian's Man with the Glove, whom I loved and taught you to love in Paris! I never said I was in love with him! He is not one to fall in love with. I said I loved him, I do, and I am as constant as the northern star. He is beautiful and good, *et je l'aime d'amour tendre;* but the Duke of Norfolk? He makes me feel like a small scullery maid peeping from behind a shutter as he crosses the yard on his way to Court. He makes me tremble, and my heart chokes me. Look at him! Think I would ever dare step in his way? See his falcon eye, and quivering nostril and nervous mouth,

and face all at white heat. He would take no more heed of me than of a small fly on the wall, or if he did, he'd crush me between thumb and finger. I'm in love with him, oh, yes, I am—but deliver me from ever taking up my abode in the same world with him.

I think that element of remoteness indispensable with my falling in love. Do you suppose I could be in love with Pleiad, as I am, if there were any danger of his materializing? My picturing delightful times doesn't *really* "plague" you, *does it?* If I thought it did, and I had time, I'd plague you some more, lots more, but I have no time to-night. On the square, Romney Flagg, on the level: Do you suppose I ever *could* see you again? Why, I couldn't look you in the face. I'd go through the floor! and I'm not easily rattled, either. If there were any chance of running into you in Florence, I'd take to the woods. Now, *tiens le toi pour dit,* once for all! I *mean* it!

Sorry you don't like the color of my soul! I *adore* pink! Unhealthy? Rubbish! Pink

is joyous and smiling and brave, and delicious, and utterly lovable, and dear! Am I sure my soul is pink? Why, I never said it was! Alas, no! Would that it were! But I live in hopes it may grow pink some day if I peg away at it hard enough. Some day I may come to feel that it is blushing on the verge of pinkhood! But it isn't yet, it is the color of my azaleas!

Yes, blue is lovely and sweet; but doesn't it just the least bit in the world pat itself on the back?

G. G., ON BOARD SHIP, R. F., AT HOME.

Spring.

There is yet another week ahead. I've been out a week. It has been good weather, mostly, but the first two days laid every one low, below. The weather doesn't affect me. An old gentleman, green about the mouth, told me the other day he had never seen so triumphant a sailor as I. I don't know why triumphant, unless it is that my big red coat with

silver buttons does look rather arrogantly cheerful.

I have spent much time at the stern staring down like a Mahatma at the boiling, seething, roaring wake. It looks like molten glass, doesn't it, or the walls of the Ice Maiden's palace. And at night the milky radiance of the phosphorescence is enough to hypnotize one into watching it until dawn.

I'm resting slowly, I came aboard too tired to think or speak coherently. But I've slept an absurd proportion of the time, and when not sleeping have lain on deck with closed eyes, listening to the rush of many waters, and in the sight and sound of sea and sky have been forgetting the ache and the pathos of life, the heart-breaking pathos of people—all of us—with our poor little ambitions and vanities and makeshifts, and our angers and impatiences, and, oh! our gratifications and happinesses! It is to weep!

Thank Heaven, there is Nature, calm and

impersonal, and above all, dignified, and not pathetic, to soothe her fretful children, in the love of whom there is no pain. Is there any love other than that of Nature to which there is no suffering inevitably attached?

There is, without exception, the most deadly respectable and dull collection of people on board I ever crossed with. My oasis is an Italian Doctor of the Royal Navy. He speaks no English, and as no one else on board speaks Italian, and as he is the most incessant chatterbox, as well as the most amusing creature I've met this many a day on land or sea, with the most enchanting smile, tho' not entirely innocent of *raillerie,* and strangely illuminating an otherwise unattractive face (he has a nose like a chicken's beak), and a most searching sense of the ludicrous . . . I've lost the beginning of that sentence. You may have detected the fact that the wind is blowing my hair and brains to the four quarters. . . .

A Week Later.

Oh, my dear! oh, my dear! oh, my dear! We arrived in Naples yesterday, and spent the whole day there, a radiant day of intoxication! The first draught of Italy certainly does produce something which amounts to a divine jag, one feels like a mild edition of a Bacchante.

They go to one's brain, that light, that sky, that air, that wonderful old-world flavor. We are out of sight of land again and to-morrow we land in Genoa, but it won't be the same. It is that first whiff of Italy after two weeks of sea in company with a lot of Anglo-Saxons that makes the enchantment of Naples. Not that alone, of course, but that which makes it all so deliciously lovely!

Oh, Lord! Make me an Italian next time! How adorable they are! How merry! I've owned up to you before that I fancy the lads more than the lassies? Oh, the lads! I lost my heart quite fifteen separate times during the day to one lad more beautiful than the

next. In a café out on the Posilipo road there were four young *Bersaglieri* who were dreams, my dear, but *dreams!*

You know, they all affect me like a lot of friendly dogs. They are so lovely to look at, but they seem to have not quite the full complement of human intelligence. When I think of what the boredom would be at the end of half an hour's talk with any one of those beautiful boys!

As I looked at the miles upon miles of sweet villas with balconies flooded with flowers (pink geraniums in particular), and all sorts of irregular corners and excrescences, all that charm of the unexpected, I felt that I could live and die happy in one of them, *col mio amato bene.* In my dreams I shall inhabit one of them with Pleiad. He was with me all day yesterday. You might not guess it from my much talk of those others, but he was, and we had a wonderful time. We did all sorts of things that tourists don't do. We lived a whole year in the day in a pink villa, with a

loggiato, with scenery in funny perspective painted on its walls, and oleanders and bamboos and orange-trees in jars, and ivy crawling everywhere. We dined out there every night and saw the stars come out, and wished on the first one—no, we didn't, for the wish had all come true, and there was nothing left to wish for, and we watched the boats go by in the bay, and the fireflies, and we sat with sprigs of orange-flower in our hands to inhale, and dreamed, and dreamed, and dreamed; and the days were pearly, and the nights enamel, and they followed one another all too fast, that was the only pain in them, and we were happy, Pleiad and Philota.

It was very nice, nicer than it could possibly ever be in reality. That is the best part of *pretending,* isn't it, that you can pretend things so much more miraculous than they ever could be. For instance, when one is thinking a year in a pink villa with Pleiad there are no fleas in it, there is nothing but the smell of flowers in the air, and oneself is

not a very near-sighted New Englander with a pug nose and irregular teeth!

Florence.

Good to be here, but oh, how different from Naples! How orderly and serene by comparison. No less lovely, but more gently austere. Not the same glamour, the same magic.

I've been to Giacosa's. I drank your health in silence. That is not a newly discovered drink, tho' it sounds so, but while every one around me was sipping and gossiping, I raised my glass and held it to the light. I might have been supposed to be searching for a crumb of cork in the amber fluid, but I was in reality pledging you—or Pleiad: *"A toi, fantôme adorable et charmant!"*

We had a little table by the window, Barbara and I, and could see all the rest of the room. Presently a number of Americans came in and settled themselves at tables near by. They were all of one party, but had to divide up, for the tables are small. Two of

them sat where I could see both perfectly. One was a youth of not more than twenty-five, the other a woman of not less than forty, to put it kindly.

He looked like a Greek statue come to life, sweetly beautiful and noble and unconscious. She was about as unattractive as it is permitted woman to be: Sallow, thin, with colorless limp hair, the hair that looks, as Viola says, as if the rats had sucked it! She was dowdy besides. If she had looked animated one might have forgiven her, but she was lumpish and stupid; or if she had breathed an atmosphere of sweetness and goodness, but she didn't!

They sat together, perfectly oblivious of all around them, without a sign of self-consciousness, he looking at her with his soul in his eyes, she adoringly at him.

Presently she took off her gloves and laid them beside her on the table. He reached out and took them up, and held them against his face, and then, absent-mindedly and very ten-

derly, kissed the tip of each glove-finger before putting them down again. The rest of the party paid little or no attention to them, and they seemed not to know that they were not alone in the world.

I wondered for a moment if they might not be Mother and Son, or Brother and Sister, but no! The look on both their faces, especially his, was a flat denial of any such idea. He was like one under a spell.

I called Barbara's attention to them, and she was not slow to see why I had told her to look. After gazing at them for a few moments, she turned back to me with eyes very large and round, and eyebrows very high, and said:

"That is a cruel sight!"

And we agreed that the days of black magic were not past.

Black magic, was it? Likelier just plain magic of Italy, Italy and spring-time.

G. G., MONTORO, NEAR FLORENCE, TO R. F., AT HOME.

Summer.

DEAR GUINEA: You say you can't make me out in Florence? Does my life here sound so very unreal? Well—it *is* almost unreal if one thinks of life in a New York apartment house, spent scrabbling through the weeks to catch up with one's work and engagements as *real* life!

I'll send you some photographs if they turn out well, they'll give you the setting of my life here. A life which flows without a ripple, serene, peaceful, wonderful. I feel like a shell in a deep, safe harbor. All here is harmony and beauty, not a detail is out of tune. Each day is flawless. It is like being in a convent, in a way, or in an Adamless Eden. It is very sweet, very restful. There is a dignity and a beauty about everything surrounding Lady Grey that makes life a constant delight to the imagination and the senses.

Each morning I make what we call *il bel*

giro of the gardens. Properly done it takes two hours. I dodder along slowly, slowly; I look at everything, at every new bud and leaf almost—at every shadow of the clouds on the hills, I smell of every new flower that has blossomed overnight. I make long pauses on sun-warmed benches, looking off over the valley at Florence, azure and rose down yonder, with the sun picking out a living diamond on a roof here and there.

We literally see no one. There is one exception, an English woman who plays superbly on the piano, comes every week and plays Bach as I have never heard him played before. I have never cared for him *much* until now, but she is enough to convert any one!

At night my balcony makes a most wonderful bed. I am as on the top of a tower—or in a balloon. It is a fine thing to sleep there, a finer to lie awake and watch the night's changes—see the color flow back into the garden and turn it from gray and black to iridescent. To see Florence flooded with moon-

light, and then touched by the first glimmer of day—and then—the sun.

You say you wonder if I'm happy and suppose I am in spite of all? In spite of what—my friend? Happy *because* of all. I can't imagine anything that would make me unhappy, any calamity, I mean. I can suffer, of course, to any extent, but that is not the same. I dare say a crime on my conscience, "a killing sin," remorse, would make me unhappy. And right here let me tell you that I am in no present danger of displeasing you by marrying, though when you so quaintly say that you "wouldn't like it a bit if I were to marry," you mean, don't you, if I were to marry one whom I didn't love. Wouldn't you *love* to have me marry one whom I truly loved? Of course you would! No—I came near enough to the other monster to see the whites of its eyes, and I had time to deliberately turn away from what I saw lying behind them—before it could gobble me up. I call myself a good woman, as women go—that is,

I don't call myself a bad one, but I can imagine a demoralization that would make me equal to the worst.

You add that you suppose "the other thing is not so pleasant either"—what do you mean by "the other thing?" Being a penniless old maid? Oh, my dear! Don't you fret! It has its compensations, especially being the kind of old maid *I* mean to be! I don't intend to dry up and blow away! You watch and see what a nice little old maid I shall be, and the kind of penniless I shall be! It's rarely I have a moment when I'd change my state with kings. Penniless or no, old maid or no, believe me I intend to love and be loved to my dying day—and after! What else counts?

Your speaking of me as more *real* to you than people you saw only yesterday interests me, it so bears out one of my deepest convictions as to the meaning of association between people. The object of their meeting is not that they shall enjoy a long and happy companionship. How many live together for a

half-century who have never truly met and been a reality to one another at all, who remain strangers to the end? The point is, that meeting they shall recognize each other and remember and understand. It matters nothing, then, whether they meet for five minutes, or a day, or a decade.

G. G., New York, to R. F., at Home.

Autumn.

"Io ritornai dalla santissim' onda
Rifatto sì, come piante novelle
Rinnovellate di novella fronda,
Puro e disposto a salire alle stelle."

G. G., B'way, to R. F., at Home.

Autumn.

How did you know I was so inordinately happy at getting home? The mere words of my quotation need not necessarily have conveyed the impression, august and joyous though the language of Dante is. I was fair bursting with glee! And the feeling of it must have reached you by some subtle medium.

You know, of course, how much I like to go to Europe! How I go as often and stop over there as long as I can! How I love the whole performance—the getting ready to go, the start, the journey, the arrival, and everything about the stay over there! But, my dear good friend, there is nothing in the whole thing that comes up to the getting home!

When I set foot on the steamer heading for this side I am the child let out of school, the prisoner coming out of a damp, dark dungeon —the uncorked champagne bottle. I'm all of it! You just can't hold me down. I effervesce all the way back, and I don't flatten for weeks after landing, either. And it is not especially that I'm crazy to get back to my family, and house, and dog—it's just the joy of getting to the U. S. A.

I have the feeling on landing that everything in sight belongs to me. It's *my* New York, and my Broadway, and my Park—and the people all over the place are *my* people,

every man, woman and child is mine, and I know them, and they know me.

A while ago, just after landing, I was coming down Fifth Avenue, and Daisy turned to me after a long, cozy silence, and said:

"Would you mind telling me what you are grinning at?"

"Oh, nothing," I answered idiotically. "I just saw Lillian Russell go by in a hansom."

I don't know Lillian Russell, you know, but just to see her drive in a cab made me feel as if I were sitting by my warm fireside.

There's nothing like it. It's worth going away from—even if there were not raptures awaiting one on the other side—just for the bliss of getting back!

Shortly after my return I made a round of visits in and near Boston and all over New England. Such a good time! Visiting people I dearly loved, being petted and spoiled and purred over and shown off!

Now I am back here in New York and trying to settle down to work again.

There is nothing in the world so contagious as irritability. You lift your eyebrows—but you shall see. You start from home on a sweet fresh morn filled with peace and good will toward women, you are in love with the whole world, and not for the whole world would you tread on any one's toes. You go to buy a bargain veil. The counter is crowded. The girl beyond it snippy—and the women before, behind and beside you beastly rude. They try to brush you aside like a mosquito, and are so peevish at your being there that you catch their ill temper, and if you were not a Perfect Lady you might forget things and be as ill-bred as they, having become infected with the uncontrollably irritable microbe.

Now there is only one microbe more infectious, that of unalterable amiability. In a hand-to-hand set-to it is so sure to come out ahead and does it so easily that the battle doesn't seem fair. The victory is so inevitable that it seems like betting on a dead sure

thing—almost unsportsmanlike. It is so sure to do the trick—and the trick is so easy to do!

What made me think of it was, that when I was coming on here to New York from Boston the other day the train was crowded, at least the common coaches were, and I was not traveling in a parlor car that day. There are feast days and fast days in my calendar, and that day I was just getting to New York and that was about all.

It was hot and very stuffy, and I searched the train from end to end for an empty seat before I found one beside a kind old gentleman. Across the aisle sat a lady with a young son, fourteen or fifteen years old. They had many, many parcels in the rack and on their laps, and some had spread on to the little single place opposite them, you know the little seat with its back to the engine, right next to the ice-water tank in some cars?

A young woman who had arrived late was having the same difficulty that I had had in finding a place. I saw her hesitate as she

looked at the seat, with the parcels on it. The mother and son were already so crowded by their bundles that she visibly disliked suggesting their giving up the space occupied by their belongings.

They looked with determined absence of mind out of the window. They weren't hearing anything. She addressed herself to the lady. and said that though she was very sorry to crowd her, she feared she would have to beg her to take her effects from the little seat opposite her. The lady looked very fussed but moved not a finger.

Then the boy began: "I don't see why you can't find some other place! You can see for yourself we are just as crowded and uncomfortable as we can be already"—and on—and on—but never a move moved he.

If I had been that girl—or no—if I had been a big man—how I should have taken that boy and that woman and cracked their heads together and pitched them swiftly out of the train window. But this girl was a

Lady and made use of such weapons as she possessed.

Her face became angelic, beaming kind. Her smile sugary. Mind you, *real* sugar, untinged with the least edge of irony, and looking at the boy with gentle interest, she asked quite simply, in a buttered pink plush voice:

"Would you *like* me to stand?"

His face blazed scarlet.

"No—no—of course not——" he stammered, and began hurriedly dumping the bundles off the seat.

She took it with fitting thanks, but she looked charmingly uncomfortable with her back against the wall which gave no room for the brim of her broad hat, and poked her head forward, or made her sit bold upright. Before many miles the boy gruffly offered to exchange seats with her, and let her face the engine. She accepted with a grateful coo, and the rest of the journey passed like any other journey.

But honestly now, aside from its being so

much pleasanter all around, just looking at it in the light of a paying investment, did you ever know the like of it?

No expense and so much coming in!

At the Time of Withered Leaves.

Philota cannot write in answer to Pleiad's letter in the same key—

"Wanting is—what?"

I can't tell, I only know that it can't be done. It would take a certain mood, and moods do not recur at will any more than do dreams. Would that they did! Then we might make a judicious selection of one very rosy mood and one rosy illusion and subsist in them forever.

To-night, and for days, I have felt very matter of fact, very wide awake.

You fear that I shall think of you less often now that I have left the Elysian Montoro, and come back to earth again? You say I seemed nearer to you there than here among my four million friends? There is little time

when I am not thinking of you, my friend, of Pleiad, that is.

You are puzzled as to the exact relationship to one another of your three personalities? It is easy to enlighten you:

Pleiad is the Perfect Lover, The One who is just as I should wish him to be, The Best that I am capable of inventing. He lives in my imagination, and fills and possesses it.

Guinea is, let us say, the only visible expression that I have of Pleiad; he is Pleiad's writing; he is the material form in which Pleiad is presented to me; he is no more Pleiad than the clothes are the man, even tho' in a sense they bear his form, and as garments suggest and represent a person even tho' they disguise, so Guinea, in a way, stands for Pleiad.

And you, R. F., where do you come in? Why, you are that upon which Guinea depends. Shall you mind being called a sort of clothes-peg?

How great is the distance between the Lover,

Pleiad (for in my mind he is the *real* person, you know), and the Peg (that's you), upon which his clothes (Guinea) hang? That . . . nobody knows . . . I suspect they are worlds apart, yet who shall say?

Here are the pictures of Montoro I promised you. Wonderful, aren't they? Of course I hated to leave it, and yet . . . at the end there were moments when I began to long for the outside world again, for the company of something beside women! Ladies are *first-rate* for wet mornings and dry afternoons . . . but, on a divine night . . . in a divine garden . . . with or without moonlight, when you are decked in your loveliest, charming clothes, charming thoughts . . .

I don't know the end of that speech, but really, you know, Italy is no place for Old Maids!

When the gates of Paradise closed behind me I'd have beamed upon Anyman, even had he been a book-agent or a plumber.

So you are going to California again this

winter? What makes you? You went there last year and I wanted you to go to Italy this time, to Florence! I wanted you to go there and see so much that I had lately seen, I wanted you to think of me as you sat before the hush of the Perugino Crucifixion in the Chapter House of Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi, and as you looked at the Masaccio frescoes in the Carmine, and in the forest of pillars in the Santo Spirito; and I wanted you to greet Michael Angelo's Brutus for me, in the Bargello, and I wanted you to see me . . . whenever you saw the blue haze filling up the distant end of the street; I wanted you not to forget me for a single instant while you were there, and I wanted you to . . . but there, what's the use, if you are going to California?

You ask me to tell you why I am "real" to you? realler than others? No, I shall not tell you. You discovered all by yourself that I *was* real, didn't you? The why you may also come upon by yourself, and if not, *qu'importe?*

Do you not suppose that Pleiad is *real* to

me? Why, he is the reallest thing in life! So real that, as I told you last year at this time he shaped my destiny . . . he stood like an Angel with Flaming Sword barring my path to destruction. Yes . . . even so. His letter at that time, that remarkable composition so filled with all the fervent images that a vivid imagination could devise of strong and splendid and exquisite and delicate, tipped the scales in the right direction.

Are you curious?

Imagine a young woman with delicate health, a slender, very slender talent, and a purse both delicate and slender. Add to these attributes a universal love of beautiful things, and an absorbing love of pleasure.

Then imagine a Man, rich—oh, brutally rich—weirdly successful, and terrifyingly used to having his own way, buying it if it is not given him, at all events getting it by fair means or foul.

Then ask yourself the old riddle: What would happen were an absolutely irresistible

force to come in contact with an absolutely immovable object? And there you have it all in your thimble.

I don't know the answer to that riddle, do you? But I know that the meeting of those two elements doesn't produce anything quiet or comfy or cozy or restful or conducive to peace and happiness.

You see, the point is: this young woman was not prepared to give her hand unaccompanied by her heart, and further, it was not as if she had been convinced that the Man truly loved her. It is to be supposed that he thought he did, according to his lights, but her lights showed her that it was not love at all. She simply had the gift of amusing him. Therein lay the whole secret of it. She might have been beautiful as the day and night, good as good bread, and clever as Mr. Bernard Shaw (she was none of this, but I'm just *talking*). She might have been a Counsel of Perfection, none of that would have been the reason for the Man's determination to "win

out." What he liked was to laugh and be distracted, what he wanted was to be amused; tho' she might not have been called in general a particularly amusing person, she had a specific talent for amusing *him*.

Now does any one call that sufficient equipment for being led up to the altar rail?

Woe's me! Think of having to be amusing at breakfast! or when you were coming down with grippe, or after hearing Tristan and Isolde, for so you must be, if your only apparent excuse for living lay in being diverting! Think of spending your life being shown off in the character of *raconteuse* to the hordes of your husband's business friends. Think of having to go through your little bag of tricks when you were made sick and faint at the bare mention of them, of having to sit up and tell stories, the edgier the better, and to imitate Duse and Sara Bernhardt and Anna Held and Yvette Guilbert, when you felt murderous at the mere thought of them! Think of sharing your days with one to whom you were

practically a sealed book, one to whom chamber after chamber of your soul was locked and barred and bolted, airy chambers, and winding corridors, and fairly spacious halls of which the Master of the House was unaware. With one who had nothing to give you mentally or morally or spiritually, whose only gifts must ever be of the sort paid for in coin, even tho' in that direction he had all the material realms of the world to spread out at your feet. And further, with one who would care not a jot for any small gift or grace of mind and character that you might be able to bestow upon him, one who would neither have eyes to see them, nor taste for them if he did.

There then was the situation. The Girl was poor, and the Man could afford to wait.

And then . . . and then . . . out of the Ambient, out of the Spring, there appeared a Lover, a spirit with wings tipped with flame . . . who, by his setting forth of "Ideas," made it so clear what Love should

be . . . might be . . . that the temptation of "Things" became as nothing.

I say temptation, tho' according to Evelyn Innes, temptation is no temptation if it can be resisted, and by the light of the flaming wing the temptation appeared not tempting at all.

.

Why should one marry?

I don't see why *any* one should *ever* marry *any*body *any*way! Unless, of course, they positively couldn't *live* without them. And as there has never lived a man I couldn't live without, the conclusion is obvious that I have never yet seen any one that I wanted to marry.

"What!" says you, "but you've been affianced!"

"True, my friend," says I, "but that proves nothing!"

I suppose I belong to what Anne in "Man and Superman" calls the poetic temperament, of which the born old maid tribe is composed, "amiable, harmless, poetic."

Have you ever read Aylwin? Well, it's a good story, but I'm not mentioning it for the purpose of advising your reading it. I want to quote a passage from it:

"Destiny, no doubt, in the Greek drama concerns itself only with the Great. But who are the Great? With the unseen powers mysterious and imperious who govern while they seem not to govern all that is seen, who are the Great? In the world where man's loftiest ambitions are to higher intelligences childish dreams, where his highest knowledge is ignorance, where his strongest strength is derision . . . who are the Great? Are they not the few men, women and children on the earth who greatly love?"

Now remember, I'm agreeing with that definition of Greatness, but if it is true, are there *any* Great Men running about now? Tell me that; you, or Mr. Watts-Dunton, or anybody!

Don't turn around and tell me that there are no women extant capable of inspiring any

very great or lasting passion. When was the length or depth or intensity of love ever gauged by the deserts or even by the charms of the Beloved? Love is measured solely by the Lover's capacity for loving.

By that gauge, no great women around either, I expect you'll say? Well, I'm not in so good a position to judge.

But I'll tell you a tale.

It is called the Tale of the Sceptic.

You see, there was once this girl who arrived at the age when it is said one must begin to *"coiffer Sainte Catherine."*

One day some one said to her, "Of course I know you have had scores of adorers, and I dare say you keep somewhere among your possessions a most interesting collection of memories—and of love letters."

He said it in a wistful, discouraged voice, with reproach brimming from his inveterately childlike eyes, as who should say, "Couldn't you have waited until I came?"

This reminded the girl that down in the

country—"down home," out in the woodshed, she thought, or was it in the attic? was a wooden box—a soap box, crammed with love letters. She had treasured them all carefully, thinking that some day, long years hence—when all the world was old, when she was an old maid—it might be diverting, gently comforting and warming to sit by her fire corner and read over those tender relics of her golden-headed days.

When midsummer came and she went home for the long warm quiet months, she searched for the box. It was in the woodshed. She had it carried up to the attic, and waited for just the day, which should seem made for the reviving of old memories, the calling up of the tender light of a day that was dead.

It did not come until the fall, then in late October dawned a day of returned summer heat, with veiling mellowing mists. This was just the time, she thought, the attic was just the place, and she—well—she who had been the loved one climbed up the steep stairs.

At last! it was open—at last she had managed to loosen one of the boards of the cover, had twisted it sidewise and could put in her hand far enough to bring out one fat bundle after another.

One was tied with pink ribbon, one with broad blue moiré, one with a rubber strap which crumbled off as she touched it; one with a violet cord and tassel, it had come tied around *such* a bunch of violets! There were plenty tied with plain, stout, serviceable string.

The attic was suffocating. The sun beat down on the great planks and beams close overhead.

She dragged the box near the window and threw up the sash. A great puff of air rushed in, cool and sweet scented. Is anything sweeter than the wind blowing from the sea over miles of pine woods and cedar swamps—and sweet fern and bay bush!

Then she sat down on the floor, leaning her back against a trunk, and began to read.

The house was very still. She read, and read—and read . . .

Here among the pink ribbon letters was one which said:

"You will always be for me the only woman in the world. That has been decreed by a court from which there is no appeal."

Her first love! He was nineteen when he wrote that to her—sixteen. She had been tremendously impressed when she had received it! She wondered now, with an indulgent smile, where he had found it, dear boy! He was sweet in those days! He was still charming for that matter. He married and went to live in Europe. The girl had seen him a couple of years before. He had come on a flying visit to New York, was sailing the very next morning, but had looked her up. She found him waiting when she came home from a dinner party, and they sat down and had one of their old chummy talks until an unmentionably late hour.

"Of course he is happy"—she murmured to

herself now—"of course there *is* no court from which there is no appeal!"

She read on. This was the blue ribbon man. There were not many of his letters, but the ribbon symbolized them. In one he said:

"I come of a tenacious clan, and I shall never give up the hope of winning you, until either you are married to some one else (which God forbid) or I am dead—I never loved a woman before, never even as boy did I know what is called calf love. I shall never love again."

"Oh, those *nevers,*" she sighed. "How long did they stand for?" Was it two or was it three years later—it was two—that he married the sweetest little smooth-haired, blue-eyed woman in the world! The girl loved her and delighted in visiting them in their downy nest, it was so cozy and hearty and full of friendliness and cheer.

Here came the rubber strap man. What memories of good times his handwriting called up! Most of his letters were written on ath-

letic club paper, or yacht club, or golf club, or some kind of club. He was the man who first introduced her to college football games. Those were the days when the sun rose and set at Cambridge. He had also been the first to take her canoeing on the river and he had a racing yacht!

Here was a note, one of the last, in which he said: "I may be foolish—you have often called me so, but the fact remains, that if you stay in town, I stay—and only if you leave, and go where I can't follow you, shall I go on the cruise. You know that I want to be where you are, now and always—always, tho' you seem to have no room for me on earth."

Strangely enough, he had found the one who was really the Right One—in the course of that very cruise! The girl had met him in the park the fall before, and he had said, smiling: "You haven't changed a bit in all these years! How do you do it? I wish you'd come and see us. My wife wants so much to

know you. I've told her about you, you know!"

Here was a diverting one. His letters were written in purple ink, tied with a gold thread. The dizzy climax he climbed to was: "For me you are the whole show—the whole thing!" She doubted whether to-day he remembered her name!

And so on—through the list—and here finally was one of whose letters there were hundreds. They were written in every mood of grave and gay, but the burden of their song was ever this: "Life is not long enough to prove my devotion to you. All time—all eternity will not suffice to show you the infinite depth of my love!"

Ah me—no—all eternity had not been required—eighteen months had sufficed. He was the only one of them all who was not married—yet—but, bless you! There was time enough!

She dropped the letters and looked out of the window. The branches of the wild-cherry

tree made such a pretty pattern against the blue. The blue was beginning to deepen, it must have been not far from sundown.

She sat lost in thought. All feeling of time seemed canceled. She could not have told at that moment whether she were living to-day or a hundred years ago. The gallery of these people who had been so real to her once, so much a part of her life, seemed to rise and pass before her like ghosts. All these sincere protestations, and they *had* been sincere at the time of writing—she gave them that credit—had meant . . . what?

These swains had found others upon whom to hang their vows, others who answered them in their own key—gave them food for more vows, and a peg to hang their hearts upon. They were married and were loving and faithful spouses, as they would doubtless have been had she herself married any one of them—tho' there the "if" that blocked the path—was too huge even to be peeped over!

But what struck her with force was the fact

that she who had never made protestations of undying fidelity, or exaggerated feeling of any kind—had been the only one to remain true to her original sentiments. As much as she had loved any of these individuals, she still loved them to-day—and she had been fond of each in some measure, tho' in no case fond enough. She was the only faithful!

And he who had last reiterated the old refrain, the one who had been the immediate cause of this unearthing of old love letters, this wholesale resurrecting of past emotions—oh, dear me . . . would. he, too . . . ? Why, of course!

Ah, well . . . she could have wept at *that* thought—had not a smile trembled in the corner of her mouth—or she could as easily have laughed—had there not been something very like a tear in the corner of her eye!

There . . . wasn't that a nice little story?

And all these many sheets I have covered sum themselves up, after all, in the simple

statement that I suppose that I look for too much from love. What I should look for in the happiness that love would bring would be something worth the loss of everything else. It might be to the onlooker blind, unwise, unworthily bestowed, wasted, a sacrifice, a crime, but to *me,* I should look for its making the supreme heaven on earth. And—you see—until I could experience so sizeable a passion, one which should fill that very large bill, I must remain as I am . . .

And who has taught me this? Who indeed—who but he—who but my Star—even before I came into the world?

G. G., Broadway, R. F. at Home.

Winter.

A young Southern girl once said in my hearing that she'd *love* to write a book! She didn't know whether she could or not, she'd never tried, she knew anyhow that she "had all the fine feelin's" to make one, but what she was not sure of was whether she'd know how

to set 'em down—but she supposed she could learn, etc.

Now the book that is wanting to push its way out of my head hasn't a glimmer of a "fine feelin'" in it. In fact, as far as I can make out, my book would be a descriptive catalogue of the galleries making up the museum of more or less precious or grotesque or foolish things that fill my memory. The various corridors in mine, filled with specimens, shall be labelled, for instance: "Scrub Ladies I Have Employed." Doesn't that resurrect them, the line of them? Can't you see them there, standing single file: the bony, the red-haired, the fat, the funny, the pretty-ish, all waiting to be told about, each a character, an individuality, with some sort of a history that makes a good yarn?

You've never had to do with Scrub Ladies, of course. You'd have to supplement Typewriter ladies in your volume.

Let me see now: "Intimate Enemies I Have Made," "Adoptive Nieces that Have

Been Born to Me," "Hand-Painted Portraits I Have Sat For," "Garrets I Have Inhabited," "Clothes, Pleasant and Unpleasant, I Have Inherited," "Tragedies (my own) I Have Lived to Laugh At," "Love I Have Recovered From," "Dreams I Have Awakened From" (the last three synonymous), "Spankings I Have Richly Earned"— Why, there's no end to the chapters that immediately spring to mind. Don't you call those thrilling and suggestive topics? Don't they call up Harlequin sets of tableaux in your own past? Doesn't each heading open a door into a well-lighted room lined with pictures, some dim with years, others still paint-wet, portraying people and things and events that you've known?

Don't you want to write a companion volume to mine?

Go ahead—Guinea—you begin! Tell me, for instance: "The Merry Tale of Dear Friends You Have Wanted to Kill," or of "Engagements of Marriage You Have Neglected to Keep."

My good four-year-old friend. It's a long time, four years, to be friends, it is quite a considerable fraction of our lives. What a lot happens in four years! How many dreams are fulfilled—how many hopes dispelled, how many heart aches stilled—how many fears quelled (sounds like verse—as I live!)—how many moods outlived! Even friendships and loves have had time during that period to spring up, to bloom, to flourish and die! The seasons come and go—and you and I stand fast—where we stood four years ago. Don't you think it is nice? So few things remain stationary, everything in the universe seems either waxing or waning, growing or decaying. I think of you to-day, I receive your letters with the same keen thrill of expectancy and curiosity as I did at the beginning; I know strangely little of you, and yet I think I knew you from the first hour.

G. G., Florida, R. F. at Home.

Winter.

You see—it had to be—I had to be "sent South"—though that expression would seem to suggest that I was an express parcel. I *was* little better than a ridiculous limp bundle of rags when I arrived, and I'm nothing to boast of now. I've been beastly ill—R. F.—and I reckon I am yet. If you are one of the healthy, who have been wont heretofore to sneer at the names "Nervous Prostration," and "Nervous Collapse," let me a lay a stern injunction upon you never to do it again! If you do—may you be forgiven—for you know not what you do! I was once upon a time that sort of a fool, among other kinds, myself, but I've been learning things, learning them "fast and frequent," and in such wise as not to forget them in haste.

There is another nervous prostrate in this house. God help her—she's been at it for three years! Good Heavens! is it possible I may be in for such a siege as that? No, no,

no, no—it simply couldn't be. I'd be dead or well before that—I'd make an end sooner. As it is—the roof has sometimes a ghastly and insistent fascination for me. Don't be alarmed—those are words—words—words.

The other N. P. and I have long nerve-to-nerve talks about our symptoms! It would make any sane well person howl to see us sitting close with eyes dilate and agoggle with horror—uttering in shuddering whispers: "And do you sometimes feel as if feathers were growing all over you?"

"No—but I feel as if my tongue and my fingers were the consistency of those egg biscuits, you know—cracknells, dry and brittle and floury, and as if I should break them off if I were not very careful!"

"Oh-h-h-h-h-h-h! I know that sensation! And do you ever, in the night, feel as if you were growing and *growing* and GROWING and GROWING—until you filled the room—and would presently fill all the world?"

"Yes!—and don't you sometimes feel as if

you were growing smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller, and would in just one more moment dwindle and disappear entirely?" And nothing can picture to you the genuine anguish that these absurd illusions represent, though as I said before, you whose nerves are solid would look upon us as two mild lunatics, and that, I suppose, in a measure is what we are . . .

The horror is in not knowing where it will end. Not being able to entirely control one's thoughts and motions and speech.

That is why I shrieked the other day when I found that I couldn't keep one of my feet still—it *would* jerk, and my toes *would* wiggle! Any sane person would have said to me: "Why, for pity's sake, let 'em wiggle—where's the harm? and don't make such a row!" But the horror lies in the fact that if you can't keep your toes from wiggling—maybe—oh, maybe presently you'll be unable to

make your tongue obey, and you'll be hearing it utter gibberish!

.

Oh, the nights! I think they have contained enough of Hell to punish me for all my sins past and to come!

Mostly I lie on a cot, on a covered veranda. The branches of a huge live oak almost sweep me off it on a windy night. The tree is full of birds; at exactly four in the morning a bluejay rings the alarm clock, for the score of other kinds of birds, and then such a fuss! They all begin their practice for the day; it is as if they were all trying their voices, clearing their throats, doing exercises, trills and scales and snatches of melody to be performed later on.

I don't speak of that as a part of the torment of the night, quite the contrary; the night and the dawn are full of the sounds of living creatures that help me to feel that the time *is* passing and that if only I can hold out and wait for it, day *will* come!

Some nights when it is clear and dry, I take my bed out on the roof, and there lying on my back, with nothing overhead, I can watch at ease the stately procession of the stars.

I spell out the constellations on a map of the heavens, by day, and verify them in the sky by night. I have plenty of time—for the night when I sleep three hours is a sweet and rare one—

In the face of the incredibly cool statements of astronomy, how utterly silly the fear of sleeplessness seems! Me and me narves dwindle down to our proper dimensions when we are told the size and distance of Sirius, hundreds and hundreds of times the size of our Sun—and *look* at him!

Oh, the heavenly restfulness and security that come of realizing oneself part of a scheme so vast and so precise! It does seem as if one *ought* to find breathing easy with so much space; one ought not to feel crowded and cramped with so much room!

I invite you to go a-visiting the stars with

me some time. We'll make an extensive tour. We'll play upon the Lyre, and ride behind the Swan and on the Dolphin's back, and we'll go and pick flowers on Jupiter where it is always spring. Which reminds me—I shall miss the spring this year. There is none to speak of down here, and it will be over by the time I go North. It is really distressing, for there are so few springs in a lifetime at best, and to miss the charming sights of the world seems like not living at all.

.

It has taken days and days and days and days to write you. Since I last wrote I've been much worse; I believe I'm losing ground. I am so exhausted that it seems impossible I should continue much longer to make the effort to draw breath.

Is it dying I am doing? I'm not afraid to go—but I also appear to be such an unconscionable time doing it; I'm afraid my courage may give out. I'd like to do it nicely, with head up—and if it takes much longer I'm

afraid I may have to do it crawling and abject. In any case, I feel I must be about pulling up the weeds in my heart, lest I carry undesirable things with me into the next world. I ought to make ready—for I am not fit to go without ceremony into God's presence. I fear that I have never lived in it.

.

Your letter came the other day. I am so glad to hear that you are going to Italy! How nice! I almost take your going as a personal favor, I am so delighted by it. How splendid it sounds! A tour in your motor through Italy, France and Germany! I hope you'll enjoy it as much as it sounds as if you ought.

You ask for credentials that will admit you to Montoro. Here they are—and another to another friend near Florence. You'll find her a dear—and so good to look at, and she lives in a charming Villa also. I wish I were to be there to show you things! But as I am now I should not be of much use to you.

Do you remember it was from Florence you first wrote me?

I want to ask you to do something for me in Florence—but it will have to be another day—this must go now to catch you, and I have forgotten how to hurry.

God go with you, dear Pilgrim.

G. G., Florida, R. F., Italy.

Spring.

We went to a festival at the Santissima Annunziata one Sunday, Kitty and I. It was fearful and wonderful how little air and how many people and lighted candles and burning incense-cages were crowded into the place. The little air was owing to the many candles. The least draught would have set them all a-flaring and a-guttering. The many people were there to see the spectacle of the many golden sparkling candlelights. The much incense was burnt and sent up its heavy sweetness (and it needed to be sweet) because of the many people; and again, because of the many

people, the little air—and the circle is complete.

I stayed as near as possible to the main entrance, where an occasional breath from outside battered its way in past the heavy curtain barring the great doorway. I stood near the silver altar of the Miraculous Virgin, and I along with the crowd sent up my own little private prayer that She bring me to the Land of Heart's Desire. I promised that if She would, I'd give Her the biggest sterling silver votive heart ever manufactured.

So many other mortals were standing and sitting and kneeling there beside that altar, all addressing themselves to Her, that She hear and intercede for them with Him, that they might receive whatever it was they craved, or be given patience and resignation to do without.

With the rest I went up to the altar and right devoutly kissed the right-hand corner of the silver slab, carried on the current of the surrounding Catholic faith and devotion

. . . and then, Yankee that I am, with certain simple notions of hygiene and microbes and what-not—I suddenly nervously battled my way out of the poisonous air to the door, and dashed for home, to inhale creosote and gargle Listerine!

Kitty, carried away by neither the fervor of prayer, nor panic fear of contagion, stayed sanely on, and came home in time for lunch, having waited until the service was over, and stopped to see the candles put out by two men in white gowns, climbing tall ladders, and bearing extinguishers on the end of long poles, and acting symmetrically in unison, one on either side of the High Altar.

At lunch she said: "I want you to go with me after we've finished eating. I want to show you something."

She wouldn't tell me what, and I followed somewhat mystified. She had a parcel, rather large, in hand. She led me to the Piazza of the Annunziata. You know the Foundlings' Hospital, the *Innocenti,* is on the left of the

church. To the right is another building, it looks rather like the *Innocenti.* A flight of several steps leads up to the colonnade that forms the entire lower story front of it. In the face of one of the lower steps is a series of semi-circular openings, grated, all but two. Kitty stopped there, at the open holes; she was most mysterious and I most curious.

She opened her parcel, it was full of scraps and bones; she dropped bits of meat at each of the openings, and then . . . I shall never forget. . . .

She, Ignorance, plunged upon the food from one of the holes, with a murderous hiss and snarl, and vanished back into her dark cavern with it; and slowly, timidly, apologetically, he, Poor Old One, crept out and sniffed appreciatively at his little scrap, and then settled down to the near forgotten ceremony of feeding himself to real food!

Piece after piece we placed before the holes, and time after time she accepted hers with curses and imprecations, he with humility

and thanks. I don't know which was the more pitiful object. Ignorance (we came to call her that in the course of many days' acquaintance) was a small yellow gutter cat, she could never have been other; she was, her figure announced, doing her best to perform a good mother's duty by a family somewhere in that pestilential recess under the steps, but nothing so emaciated ever existed outside a caricature cat in a comic paper. She had no neck to speak of, her head, fastened to her body by a spine and no more, was all hate—glaring sulphurous eyes, enormous bat ears, and spitting grin; she was the shape of a knife blade, and her fur was all in tatters, off in patches, from battles and mange. Her poor twig of a tail lashed sullenly, and she was weak, so weak, but for the intense strength of her resentment and venom against all the world. After the first few courses in her meal, when she no longer needed, hunger-driven, to pounce like a flash upon her prize, she seemed to take comfort in lying just with-

in the mouth of her cave, like a wild beast in its lair, growling and hissing insults at us for standing there watching her. She said in intelligible, unmistakable cat talk: "Give it here all at once, give it quick, and get out of my sight, and curses on you!"

And he, Poor Old One, had belonged to people once, I think, one could tell by his remnants of sweet manners; a tortoise-shell, as far as one could make out from the few shreds of fur remaining on him, but oh! the unfortunate! he was a crazy patchwork of scars and wounds and sores and scaly scabs, and I don't believe he could see. . . .

But he crouched half-in, half-out of his hole, and crunched his bones and food, making a rattling, raucous sound that intended to be a purr, but had got all distorted and queer because he had seen such sad, bad times! and when he had finished one bit, he held up a tragic sightless head, sniffing the air for more!

Kitty had seen them first upon coming out of the church in the morning. They had ven-

tured out of their holes, and were lapping a few drops of water blown out of the fountain into a little puddle between two stones, and Ignorance had smelled hungrily at an old bit of orange-peel.

There are no areaways in Florence, no garbage cans where gutter cats can scrape a living, there's nothing for them . . . nothing. . . . There was a custom once, such a kind one for the kitties: At noon each day a monk from the Church of San Lorenzo used to give food to any cats that wanted it enough to come to him for it, and oh! there were plenty in waiting for him! But what has become of the custom? Where bides the good Saint o' Cat's Meat?

Well, that Sunday began it. Every day after, until we came away from Florence five weeks later, either Kitty or I, or both, carried food to the starvelings.

Once, for three days Poor Old One didn't appear. We put food at his door, but Ignorance ate it as well as her own. We wondered

if she had not perhaps made way with him for the sake of his share, killed him for his Life Insurance, but presently he reappeared. She was always there in waiting, growling the moment she heard our footsteps. And so it was to the end. On the last day Poor Old One came out, and made a pathetic, dreadful attempt to rub up against Kitty's skirt, but Ignorance, wild-cat, hell-cat, if anything loathed us more poisonously the last day than the first. Dear, dear, dear, how she detested us!

Anyway, they both had one spell in their lives of sleeping on full stomachs!

And I reckon there's a Moral there somewhere, too, if one were energetic enough to find it, which I'm not.

And now that you are going to Florence, I want you to do two things for me. Go to the church of the Annunziata and send up a little prayer for me at that Silver Altar, and maybe buy and set burning for me a candle of white wax that I may have the thing I

wish, which is to be well . . . and then, on your way out, find the good dame who sits under the portico with her basket, buy of her a rosemary bun, or two, and then go to the Cave o' the Cats.

Ignorance and Poor Old One are of course long turned to dust, but I dare be sworn there are cats of the same stamp crawling in their stead.

Give them for me a memorial crumb.

G. G. IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS, R. F., SWITZERLAND.

Spring.

So you have beheld Montoro in its sweet spring dress of roses and irises and white lilies.

Yes, it is something to be grateful to me for. One must ever feel richer for having the memory of it stored away among one's possessions. I feel that I own nothing more than I do that place. I incorporated it into my system the last time I was there, I can feel

every aspect of it; none perhaps more than the deserted round garden at the upper end of the green, and the balustrade under the statue of Diana at the foot of it, leaning against which I have seen the Beautiful City by every light of night and day. But then . . . when you've said that, you feel you must go on and enumerate every corner of the place, every inch of which is inexpressibly beautiful.

I'm glad you saw Lady Grey, and glad you realized her wonderfulness.

Yes, I have been horribly ill, but I'm better now, and I think I'm going to be well, tho' even now I find it difficult to imagine it, I was so sure that no one could ever go through what I did, and come out of it into life and light and health again.

I can't look upon this illness as a loss of time, but merely a time of trial, and I have learned things and seen things which I can never forget.

After the blackest hour of my life, I saw what eyes of flesh do not see, I heard what

ears do not hear. I know what the people of old underwent who *saw;* I know that it requires a combination of the excess of physical fatigue, with the extremest mental alertness and activity. One stands in an untrodden wilderness, away from every one, from all one has ever known before, and then one sees, hears, learns and knows things to which one has been blind and deaf; in a blinding flash one learns the meaning of everything; and I don't think the radiance of it can ever quite desert one.

As the weeks go by, and I rub up against the world and people again, I feel it fading and slipping from me, but even so, R. F., everything is so changed—you don't know! It was always beautiful enough to me, but now *Life* seems so miraculous, so truly God-given, God-like, nay, so truly God's very self, that to willingly kill or hurt even a blade of grass or an ant is impossible. I have a feeling of kinship with the very stones and elements, say nothing of man and beast. We are all

made of precisely the same stuff, and that stuff happens to be God!

How strange it is, and yet how absurdly natural and simple.

To think how lately it seemed to me that existence could hold in store for me nothing that would repay me for what I was suffering, and now—the result has been an experience so beyond words wonderful, that for the sake of attaining it I would go through all again; and that is putting it as strongly as I can.

"Who found for you the waters that soothed your heart-break first?"
"Oh, who but these, my Sorrow, my Hunger, and my Thirst."
"Who made your eyes the wiser to hail the farthest star?"
"Who but my Dark I thanked not, my Dark where no stars are."

.

I wonder has it ever come to you. the plain, undiluted *Genius* that has gone to the inventing of every last trifling detail in the creation of this wonderful, wonderful beautiful world.

and of our wonderful beautiful selves who are all one and indivisibly He? When you reflect that nothing is chance, that every atom has had to be thought out and executed—and then *look* at the effects produced! It makes me gasp with delight to think of the Poet and the Artist and the Inventor and the Mechanic that went to the making of it all! Think of inventing the smell of sweet peas and wet earth. Look at that inspired aspen-tree, rippling and winking like water in the sun, flickering like flame, sounding like an elfin cavalcade—and look at that fountain of green spray that calls itself an elm! You hear people talk about Japanese art . . . Just look, look at the grasses balancing on the edge of the road, with their lovely shadows at their feet!

Isn't it strange, the great meaning things can come to have for us which, as a matter of fact, do not exist at all? I don't know whether I can explain what I mean, but take for example the mountains.

I can look up, as I write, and see them over there, and as you read you will look up and see those others before you. They are 'way off in the horizon, they stand so sweet and dim and pensive, one coherent silhouette from top to foot, one lovely blot of color, and the tender message they send us across space is so calm, so full of assurance and peace, their charm is so mystic, so subtle, themselves are so adorably grave—and—we *love* them.

But that is not the mountain at all! The real mountain is the one we climb. It has its charm, but it is totally other than that other! The charm of detail, of cool shade and dancing lights, and cloud shadows, winding paths and grateful brooks, of solidity, reliability, and then there are open faces of rock, and rusty patches of hewn or burnt forest, blemishes unseen in the distance, yet not unlovable.

And the stars! What we see are not the stars at all! They are great, awful cataclysmic things, whirling and sizzling away; and what we think them is the very essence of re-

pose and imperturbability, "still steadfast, still unchangeable," and we love what the distance makes them seem, which is not in the least what they are at close range.

And you and I, at our immeasurable distance? There it is! We cherish an aspect which certainly is *there* for *us,* is perhaps in some mysterious way as *real* as any other, but we can't say we love the *real thing,* can we? because we don't know the real thing. The real thing may be just as worthy to be loved, but it certainly is different from that to which we have pinned our affection.

You know so absurdly little of me, really! You only know what I have chosen, selected to tell you. I have a notion that I know you much better, for you are *une âme sans détours* —and I fear I am not.

G. G., New London, R. F., California

Summer.

Has it been unkind, dear, letting all these months go by without sending you a single

word? I have no excuse to offer. I couldn't write, that was all. I had no answer for your unanswerable letters from California, and silence seemed the only reception I could give them. I had nothing to say. I am not sure *now* that I know *what* to say, but suddenly, I feel that I can write you, where before I couldn't.

If you remember at all the little tale that I once told you concerning a certain Sceptic, you will realize that I am not likely to be disproportionately impressed by avowals of undying, exclusive devotion and faith—and all the rest of it.

This seems to carry with it a tone of severity which I am far from feeling or wishing to assume. I think, however, that your attitude puts me rather on the defensive.

Do you remember the night before you left Paris years ago? Do you remember how often in the course of the evening you said and repeated and repeated again: "You don't know how I shall miss you!" "You have no idea

how I am going to miss you!" and finally, almost exasperated, "But you don't in the least seem to realize how dreadfully I'm going to miss you!" You nearly made a grievance of it that in those few days I should have succeeded in leaving a scratch upon your glassy surface! You came near taking me to task.

And now you speak (I say now, it was months ago, of course) of the Prince in the Arabian Nights who sickened for love of the Princess's portrait, and you say that you have fallen in love with my portrait of myself, by which you seem to make me responsible. My Portrait of Myself. Have I written you a portrait of myself? I can't help wishing, R. F., that I could see it. What a funny *museau chiffonné* I must have given myself! Incoherent, contradictory, illogical, you surely aren't going to put the blame on *me* if you have fallen in love with anything so ornery and no account and po' white as G. G.?

I really think it is *I* who should feel injured. We were playing such a nice little game! And

it wasn't in the game, you know, that we should become people—it was all to be pen, ink, and paper! I warned you time and time again that I would never "materialize."

And now, R. F., seriously—there is just one thing in your letter that you are *not* permitted to say . . . *that I won't have!* and that is your grand finale, your trump card, your thunderous statement:

"You have made all other women in the world forever impossible for me!"

My dear, dear child! How excruciatingly funny that is going to look to you some day, and if I'm any sort of a Prophet that day is close at hand!

No, dear Boy, there is a special name for people, who being impossible themselves, make other things and people impossible, and I do assure you, that's not the kind of a dog I am!

And now—please, please, dear, let's forget all about it. Write me—write me soon—and tell me all about yourself.

You see where I am—I am visiting dear friends—having a *glorious* time. There is the loveliest yacht, a racer, a magnificent creature that wins cups and things; and a new red devil car, and lots of horses and traps, and myriad books, and the loveliest house, with a Hall in it that is the most satisfactory room I've ever seen in America, and *such* a garden! I'm sitting in an arbor now, smothered in crimson rambler, so vivid it looks incandescent like live coals, as if it would burn my hand if I touched it—and outside I can see great patches of cool Japanese iris—and the sea beyond.

Best of all are the people, my beloved and wonderful hostess, and my fascinating and wonderful host.

I went to see the Harvard-Yale boat race the other day, saw it from the deck of the most splendid yacht, a regular ocean liner—a yacht fit to go round the world in. I didn't know how greatly I cared about the outcome. I supposed myself quite indifferent, until sud-

denly it came to me that it really wouldn't be *fair* were Yale to win. It had won so often! and I had never seen one of those races, and now that I was there to see—why, of *course* Harvard must win! And when the boats hove in sight with Harvard in the lead, I yelled myself voiceless and felt tears rush down my face, emotion, joy, gratitude—gratitude as great as if the victory had been planned solely for my small private gratification.

It made me no less sorry for the crew of Yale boys sculling up the "backway" afterwards, with one lying unconscious in the bottom of the boat, while the Harvard boys pulled up the front way over the course to the tooting of whistles and sirens, and cheering of the crowds and braying of bands.

But somehow—it seemed so right and fit, that Harvard should have its taste of victory.

The evil day of my getting back into harness has been put off—and off—I have spent months with these dear people, and when the time comes for work, and struggle again—I

shall be a giant refreshed by all these days of luxurious care-free idleness.

Nerves are slow things to mend. I thought I was well long ago, but I soon found how little reserve strength I had—all the reservoirs and pools were exhausted, drained dry, and it needed this long, long lapse of loafing to give them time to slowly filter full again, and now I feel as if nothing would ever tire me in this world. I have hours, days, weeks at a time of walking about two feet above the ground, treading on a current of sparkling air, when I feel so full of vigor and power that I am convinced that were I to lay the flat of my hand against the Times Building and *push*—it must topple over. When I feel there is no miracle so amazing it could not easily be performed; when I am permeated, saturated with the feeling: All's well!

I could not write you so, dear Friend, were I not *sure* that all's well with you—write and tell me just how well. I wish you were here

to *tell* me! I am going to a ball to-night. If you were here we would dance and dance and dance together—to the tune of our vast content.

I wonder what you *are* doing this very day. What are you seeing, feeling, saying? It is so long since I heard from you! It is startling sometimes to remember that tho' I never see you—and tho' I may not have thought of you, even, for a "considerable spell"—yet you are going on just the same—like Niagara and Athens, and the Nile and the North Pole—a continuous performance and I not in the audience! Don't you sometimes resent it, too? Realizing that people are living their lives, having their laughs and their bits of triumphs and their heartaches and you with no part in them—not *in* it!

And so I wonder on this lazy, hot, drowsy afternoon, just what is uppermost in your mind, of whom you are thinking oftenest, what is interesting you most nowadays? Your

last letters notwithstanding, I permit myself the liberty of doubting that it is *I!*

G. G.

Telegram.

G. G. TO R. F.

I knew it—knew it—knew it. Felt it in the marrow of my bones. Oh, I'm so glad—so happy, and, my best Friend, I have so much to tell you myself, seems like I'd burst.

G. G., LENOX, R. F., CALIFORNIA.

Summer.

What a dear, funny world it is, and what a dear, funny Boy! When I read your letter I leaned back and laughed and laughed and laughed, and then I grinned for the rest of the day. I'm still grinning! I'm grinning the grin that won't come off. There are so many reasons for it that if one or two or ten were to fail, there would still be enough left to keep me grinning until my skull turns to mould.

Oh, Guinea, dear, dear Guinea, I'm so glad

for you! and I'm so happy on my own hook that:

"And who has been happiest? Oh I think it is I—
I think no one was ever happier than I."

I don't know where to begin, at your end of it, or my own. I'll be polite. I'll attend to your story first—mine will keep.

The opening of your letter was the most delicious piece of writing I ever read! You stated that you wanted to write, and you wanted to write; that you had before shamelessly covered reams of paper with stuff that was of no moment whatever—and now here you had some real news to tell me and you couldn't bring yourself to tell it, because—you didn't know how to make it fit on to your last letter, the letter that ended in such a blaze of glory!

Oh, dearest Boy, why should you have *wanted* it to fit! Why should anything *ever* fit—except my wedding clothes! Have you

yet to learn that *nothing* follows because of anything else; and that the man who steals pennies out of a blind man's dog's cup may in the next hour give his life to save that dog's?

Besides—to my idea—it *did* fit! Given that a man in March ends a very spirited and highly colored letter with a *cri de cœur* like: "You have made all other women forever impossible for me," of course the inevitable next step is that in May he gains the consent of the "prettiest girl in California" to be his!

However, I forbid you to call anything that I've ever written you cynical. Don't you *dare* say cynical to me! If there was raillerie in my last letter to you, Dearie Boy, the raillerie was so gentle as to be positively tender. And do you say *cynical* to me?

Go to! Go to!

And now to the point. I'm simply *de*lighted! Nothing could be nicer than your falling in love (seriously in love, this time, you know) with that Girlorother I've been telling you about for so long, and getting mar-

ried. Nothing could be nicer except my doing the same—but—hold on—that comes later. It's so hard to wait to tell you, Guinea!

Well—haven't I been telling you this fifty years that I longed to see you carried away by an enthusiasm—a passion, that should sweep you off your feet, and make you stand on your head, and turn handsprings, or do something spontaneous and HOT!

Well—there now—it has come to pass. Bless the Girl that did the trick! I wish I could see her! and yet why? *Je la vois d'ici.* she is *jolie à croquer*, and fresh and young, and sweet and altogether entrancing, and, now don't be cross, *she thinks* you the wisest, cleverest, most knowing man in all the Universe. Tell me—do you write verses to her wonderful eyebrows?

And you are going to work—too! Oh, I *am* glad! Actually—all my best wishes for your welfare coming true—Love and work! and such splendid work—to go and live in the great ruined city, and help build it up again—

and make it better and more beautiful than before. That's a Man's work! I heave a great sigh of satisfaction whenever I have time to think of it.

There is just one wee sma' point of pain in it all for me—Is your being a married gentleman going to make it that I shall know you no more? Shall I hear no more from you? Shall you never again be inspired to write me just what you truthfully think about things? Will the Lovely Fair look askance upon your fat letters and mine? She would be so more than welcome to see either if she cared to—and then—tho' this she would never guess, or believe if she were told—you are probably really just a grain a nicer person for your five years' course in Polite Correspondence than you would have been without.

I don't want to lose my Friend. Were I to misquote the Book, I might say that there are men for all things: Men with whom to talk, to walk, to read, to laugh; men to eat with, to drink with, to dance with, to flirt

with; men to hate, and men to love; and A MAN—yes—Guinea—there is A MAN to marry; so also there is a man to write to and that's you!

And am I going to lose you?

And now I've been so long talking about you, that I haven't the time to do justice to writing about what's been doing around these parts. But—it will keep; and I enjoy keeping you guessing for a day or two longer, tho' I scarce can wait to tell you!

Good-night. G. G.

G. G., Bar Harbor, R. F. at Home.

Summer.

Thanks for your telegram, Guinea! It was even sweller than mine. But you are 'way ahead of the times—that is—you are in a sense. You are congratulating me, when I'm not yet engaged! Oh, I know—no modest maiden talks about her trousseau or the man she's going to marry until the Great Question has been asked and answered. And I *don't*

talk about it. I don't breathe it to any one but you—and you don't count—you dear old thing!

Now let me tell you all about it!

I wrote you on the very day, the Eventful Day, on the day of the ball, didn't I? It was funny how after so many moons of putting off writing you, I suddenly felt that I could with perfect ease and security say anything to you. It was as if coming events had cast their light before and I could see; I had a sort of subconscious sense that you had settled your affairs in so satisfactory a form that I could be quite at ease with you again.

Well then—we went to the ball. It was in the house of friends in New London, a remarkable house! It has a music room sixty by eighty feet large and everything in proportion, including the heartiness of the hosts. We were rather late arriving, we had lingered on and on over dinner, and had sat out in the rose garden, rather hating the thought of dancing,

and the idea of going indoors seemed a good one to put off.

As we stepped into the room where they were dancing, my eyes, Guinea, *lit* on *him* across the room. Yes—on *him,* and I stopped short as if I'd had a galvanic shock, whatever that is; I reached out my hand to steady myself, I suddenly felt light-headed and wobbly in the knees, and I said in a sort of somnambulistic voice: "Who is that? I think I never saw a man before!"

Well—at that moment the Gods appeared, and all the Half-gods *go*-ed. And from that moment there has existed nothing but *he*.

I wish I could tell you anything that would sound a bit like what it was like, but words are the very deuce when you really want them to *mean* anything. I can think of nothing but the meeting of the Tragic Comedians to match it. Forgive me, but I can call up no more modest analogy. It was the Miracle of Miracles, electric—dazzling—instantaneous.

Oh, Romney! he is so wonderful, so right!

And the marvel of finding him! I had always known he must be somewhere, and that some time I must find him. Yet times I feared I never should; times I used to say to myself: "Why do I feel so sad and so forlorn? Because the one I love is not yet born?" or else I feared he had lived a thousand years ago. There have been so many, so many, who have passed into my life and out again, and I have sometimes wondered, "Is this he? or if it is not—maybe he'll *do, faute de mieux?*" but I couldn't, couldn't be satisfied, and I knew that I should know on the instant when he really came, and that he must know also. And, Romney—so it was—so it is! Isn't it wonderful—wonderful—wonderful!

Don't think me gone stark staring mad. It only seems as if I had a great sunrise going on inside of me all the time.

The strange part is that after that first night and after one marvelous day spent on the water—a day never to be matched—what do you think! I got so scared, I had such a plain

case of panic, I could stand no more. It was all so overwhelming and so swift. What did I do? Incontinentally *fled!* I made them take me off in the motor. We'd been planning a trip of a week or two.

What a journey it has been! I am in a trance.

I reckon you'll think me crazy, but it's Gospel true that tho' I know—of course—that this fall—in New York . . . yet *really* I don't care if I never see him again, for he is *mine,* whether he knows it or not, and I am his, whether he wants me or not, and oh—best of all—*He is!* That is the thing that really matters—HE IS! and I have seen him, and he is all that I could have pictured, and so much more which I never should have had the imagination to imagine, splendid and noble, and kind and true and strong and sincere, and with a charm—oh, but a *charm* of speech and manner!

Now you will think: "Of course, she sees

through rose-colored goggles, but Love was ever blind!"

You are mistaken, me lad! Love is *not* blind. Love is the most sensitively critical thing in the world, and I the most clear-sighted critic.

You ought to be able to see from the long fiction we have kept up together for so long just how it is with me. Pleiad has been the treasure of my life. I addressed him through you, because in a sense, you never existed for me at all! Don't misunderstand, R. F.—you, the man in Paris, existed as the memory of an acquaintance, and as a handwriting utterly impersonal, and because of that I could invest you with all the qualities I required in Pleiad, since—not being there to gainsay or fall short of them, you could not entirely "scatter the vision forever." When at one time and another you *did* fall short—I spared not to scold you roundly—did I—you poor dear!

I have loved—how I have loved, not you, R. F., but him—Pleiad, with all my soul and

being. This is no news to you—you knew it. The fiction we began in laughter has led me to my great happiness to-day. At the crucial moment Pleiad saved me, and for that—all my life I must be in your debt. He made me pause and wait—the Star Lover saved me, and now the Man has come.

Isn't it beautiful that the case fits the other way about, too? though how it happens to is more than I can fathom. For there's only one of *him,* and there are so many of *me* the world over, and it is such a faded, dull commonplace me!

Do you wonder that I've gone back to my old tricks of not sleeping? Why sleep? How should I wish to sleep—with such wonders to think about? I am so full of joy I almost wish I might die to-night. Now I *know* you think me gone dotty!

I have always wanted to find my own. I have not wanted to wander through space and eternity a misfit—and now that I've found him and he has found me, he might even go so far

as to marry some one else if he chose, and it wouldn't matter. What happened within the first five seconds or our meeting was final—complete.

Laugh now—laugh *all you like!* But you won't laugh—you are too happy yourself to mock at my happiness, you are too divinely mad yourself to jeer at my madness.

Dear Boy—among other lovely things, is it not nice that our each having found our True Love, our each having given our heart to Another, has brought us only the closer together?

Good-night. G. G.

G. G. AT HOME, R. F. AT HOME.

Summer.

After the motor trip I didn't go back to New London, as you see I came home. I've been here a little over a month, and in that time, Guiuea, what had to be had to be.

He couldn't very well fly about the country in hot pursuit of our automobile, that

would have bordered upon the absurd, but when he heard that I had come home, he came here. He could only stay week ends, but then he went away and came again, and then he came again, . . . and he will keep on coming, Guinea, until I go back to New York —for it is all settled.

Thanks for your dear, good letter. It did me good to hear you talk in that hearty major key—you who have always had a melancholy devil lurking in the background. You sound so gorgeously, healthily happy that I *love* your girl for it, and am her friend forever! I feel that I know her well from your portrait of her.

You want to hear all about him? How can I tell you? Anything said about him would make him sound just like the average man, and he *isn't!* He's the only man in the world.

What does he look like? He is dark, of course. Your girl is dark, they had to be since you and I are such towheads. He is all dark, and his eyes are placid as a cow's at

times, sometimes they are penetrated with a smile that seems to come bubbling up from fathomless depths, and at times I can call them nothing short of turbulent, fiery brown with purple lightnings, and if the eyes are windows of the soul, his tell the whole story. He is big, big as you are, unless he is bigger, and he makes me feel like a canary bird perching on his big fist. He is the sanest person living, and what is sanity but the combination of tremendous passions under superb control? He is distinguished as a European crowned head, or would be, but that they all look so common beside him. He gives one the sense of enormous power combined with boundless gentleness and kindliness and warmth of heart and good nature and humor.

What's his business? I'm obliged to confess he has none! But that doesn't mean that he's an Idle Rich! He's the busiest man in the country except maybe our busy President. He is kept somewhat employed looking after the things he owns, but his interest

is in the things that need straightening out. He has a great gift for straightening the crooked—and pulling down the rotten—and raising the fallen. I suppose he might be said to have a hand in politics, and he will have more and more. He's the sort of man who ought to, whose great interest lies not in private concerns and little specialties, but in People and action and great big public considerations.

But I can't tell you about him. You'll have to see him for yourself. One can't describe personality, at least *I* can't, and his long, strong suit is that he's the most lovable thing ever created, and the most human. He's a giant and he's a tiny child; a good child, and sometimes he's a bad child; a king who knows equally well how to rule and how to serve. He is a large, a generous, person in every sense. Generous and charitable materially, generous and charitable in judgment.

I must tell you something: he is not Pleiad! Emphatically he is not. Pleiad was a poet

and a dreamer and an artist, a star, an angel, a saint; Pleiad was a phantom knight. A knight in armor with the moonlight shining on it. Pleiad was an ideal—and to him all praise and thanks; he served his purpose until —the Man came—and the man's name is John!

G. G., B'WAY, R. F., CALIFORNIA.

Autumn.

Like Diogenes, I have my little lantern—and I'm ransacking New York, not to find an honest man—I've found him, but what seems much more difficult, to spot out *where* are the Happy People. Where do they hide themselves? Occasionally I see a woman who looks fairly contented—comfortable and fat; and sometimes a man who has dined looks enormously entertained—but where are the people who are as happy as I am? It can't be that I'm the only one in this town?

Where are those whose clothes with difficulty keep them from exploding from that inward ferment of delight? Where is the Boy

whose Girl said "Yes" last night? Where is the Girl whose Dad finally gave his consent this morning? Where is the Man whose Son was successfully born in the small hours? Where are they upon whom rests the Peace of God? Where is the Woman whose Mother is getting well? Where are those who after the pinch of poverty and pain have sudden release? Where are they who have done good work, and given good measure, and made great sacrifices, and been good and faithful servants?

I want to see in the face and eyes of my neighbor some reflection of the light within. I can't believe he is as dark as his surface indicates. Is it that he studiously applies himself to erasing from his features any tell-tale trace of the glow? I scan face after face in the streets, in the shops, everywhere, and I cannot find the Happy Ones!

And I so wish they were all as happy as I!

Don't you think you would know if you saw me? Don't you think if you saw me buzzing

about buying all my pretty, pretty, pretty things, or if you saw me stitching and hemming on them that you'd say to yourself: "There goes the happiest woman that ever breathed the air of Heaven!" Don't you think if you saw me in Church trying to make myself not too grotesquely unworthy to receive such a shower of good things, and singing praises out of a humble but not the least bit contrite heart, don't you think you'd catch a wafture of my consecrated crowning mood?

Don't think, though, Guinea, that I'm all the time in carolling vein—that that is all there is to it. I have my awed and awful moments, my moments of feeling myself go pale. . . . Suppose I were unable to make him happy!

I say to myself sometimes: Maybe this is all nothing but a wonderful dream. Maybe this is what *every* woman experiences, and afterwards—even after happiness and security that match mine—come tragedies and disillusion and soul-sickening despair!

Well, come what come may, I am safe! At this crisis as in all others, I lie in the hollow of the Great Hand that will not let me fall, or entirely crush me, and will not turn my cup to one of unmixed gall. Whatever comes hereafter, I have stood on the Summit of the Mountain, and I have walked through the Gates of Sunrise.

Were I to-day to be assured that all that lies hidden in to-morrow would be storm and shipwreck, I would go on, I could not go back, for now I realize that it is not for the sake of continuing my own great joy that I am following in the path that looks all lined with rose petals. I must go on because I must, no matter what the path leads to.

I know that all cannot forever be at this white heat of ecstasy for him and for me—I know . . . I know that gray days, black days, stormy days, must come, and it is more for their sake than for the golden ones that I want to be with him. I want to be with him in his successes, in his triumphs, in his great

hours, but how much more I must be with him in the inevitable hours of despondency and disgust, in the possible hours of failure. I want to be with him as he grows old, to grow old along with him. How could I bear another to be there in my place if he were ill and sad? His mother is the only one I should not be jealous of—and she is no longer here—and I want to be mother and sister and friend, as well as his love and his wife.

Good-by, dear R. F.; you will be married only a few days after this reaches you. You in the season of Falling Leaves, and I at Blossoming Lilac Time. Your church is to be gorgeous with crimson and golden autumn boughs? Mine will be sweet with purple and white perfume.

You are coming to New York on your honeymoon? Isn't it delightful! (We are going to Italy, of course—to Venice.) When you come I shall meet your Mary, I want so to see her and to love her, and you must know

and like my man! You can't help it, you know!

Each other we shall dodge and hide from. We'll keep up the game to the end—won't we? though maybe we'll go so far as to have chats over the telephone?

Good-by—good-by—good-by.

God have you in His care. He has!

God keep you. He will!

God love you. He does!

DELIGHTFUL ANTHOLOGIES

POEMS FOR TRAVELERS

Compiled by MARY R. J. DUBOIS. 16mo. $1.50 *net*, cloth; $2.50 *net*, leather.

Covers France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, and Greece in some three hundred poems (nearly one-third of them by Americans) from about one hundred and thirty poets. All but some forty of these poems were originally written in English.

THE POETIC OLD-WORLD

Compiled by Miss L. H. HUMPHREY.

Covers Europe, including Spain, Belgium, and the British Isles, in some two hundred poems from about ninety poets. Some thirty, not originally written in English, are given in both the original and the best available translation.

THE OPEN ROAD

A little book for wayfarers. Compiled by E. V. LUCAS.

Some 125 poems from over 60 authors, including Fitzgerald, Shelley, Shakespeare, Kenneth Grahame, Stevenson, Whitman, Browning, Keats, Wordsworth, Matthew Arnold, Tennyson, William Morris, Maurice Hewlett, Isaak Walton, William Barnes, Herrick, Dobson, Lamb, Milton, Whittier, etc., etc.

THE FRIENDLY TOWN

A little book for the urbane. Compiled by E. V. LUCAS.

Over 200 selections in verse and prose from 100 authors, including Lowell, Burroughs, Herrick, Thackeray, Scott, Milton, Cowley, Browning, Stevenson, Henley, Longfellow, Keats, Swift, Meredith, Lamb, Lang, Dobson, Fitzgerald, Pepys, Addison, Kemble, Boswell, Holmes, Walpole, and Lovelace.

These three books are uniform, with full gilt flexible covers and pictured cover linings. 16mo. Each, cloth, $1.50 *net*; leather, $2.50 *net*.

A BOOK OF VERSES FOR CHILDREN

Over 200 poems representing some 80 authors. Compiled by E. V. LUCAS. With decorations by F. D. BEDFORD. *Revised edition.* $2.00. Library edition, $1.00 *net*.

"We know of no other anthology for children so complete and well arranged."—*Critic*.

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

PUBLISHERS NEW YORK

26273

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 001 418 618 3